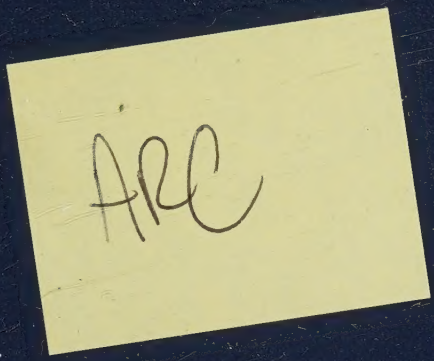
ARC

808.86 G28f
Gentry 1357349
Fifty famous letters of history
ANNEX

PUBLIC LIBRARY
FORT WAYNE AND ALLEN COUNTY, IND.

DO NOT REMOVE
CARDS FROM POCKET

REA

FRIENDS
OF ACPL

ANNEX

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2023 with funding from
Kahle/Austin Foundation

https://archive.org/details/fiftyfamouslette0000curt

FIFTY FAMOUS LETTERS OF HISTORY

CURTIS GENTRY

FIFTY FAMOUS LETTERS OF HISTORY

NEW YORK
THOMAS·Y·CROWELL CO.

808.86
G28f

COPYRIGHT 1930 BY THOMAS Y. CROWELL CO.

Designed by Werner Helmer

MADE IN THE U. S. A. BY THE VAN REES PRESS

TO

GRACE

In appreciation for helpful suggestions

These pages are dedicated

1357349

FOREWORD

GREAT LETTERS OF HISTORY! *War, love, intrigue, hate, disappointment, bitterness, revenge — all the passions that have moved men, women and nations throb through these living human documents. Kings and queens, princes and princesses, statesmen, scientists, philosophers, warriors, poets, clergymen, spurned and beloved women, give the burning secrets of their hearts as this mighty pageant of letters moves down the centuries.*

The unaffected effusions of the heart, always to be found in private correspondence, form a real and unadorned literature of the world, a literature that finds a responsive chord in the heart of every

reader. In such epistles we see the real man and the real woman.

A great letter may be the beacon light of its age. It may have the universality of truth, of profound human feelings. In these great letters of history, Alexander speaks for all conquerors; Bacon for the fallen man; Keats for the disappointed lover; Mary Queen of Scots for the unliberated affections of women; Huxley for the spirit of science; Princess Alice for the real human side of royalty, and Edgar Poe for misunderstood youth and genius.

CURTIS GENTRY

CONTENTS

1. SOCRATES TO KING OCHUS 3
"I Had Rather Go Afoot"— In which the great philosopher spurns a worldly honor.

2. ALEXANDER THE GREAT TO DARIUS 5
"Call Me King"— A letter which changed the course of civilization.

3. DIOGENES TO THE PEOPLE OF SYNOPE 8
"I Choose to Be a Vagabond"— Also a letter concerning this great cynic philosopher's unique and witty defiance of Alexander the Great.

4. CICERO TO JULIUS CAESAR 12
"A Pious, Good and Grateful Man"— In which the great orator finds himself in the

midst of a turmoil which involves his personal friendships and his love for his country.

5. BRUTUS AND CASSIUS, TO MARK ANTONY 15
"Think Not How Long Caesar Lived, But How Little He Reigned"— The uncertain temper of one of the great epochs in history.

6. HEROD THE GREAT TO AUGUSTUS CAESAR 18
"My Friend and His Wicked Woman"— Concerning the fidelity of a friend, and also the relations between Mark Antony and Cleopatra.

7. AUGUSTUS CAESAR TO THE ROMAN BACHELORS 22
"The Virgins of Rome Are Neglected"— Wherein a great Emperor, who has the welfare of his country at heart, reprimands his bachelor subjects.

8. ST. PAUL TO TIMOTHY..... 25
"I Have Fought a Good Fight, I Have Finished My Course, I Have Kept the

Faith"— An example of true greatness and real happiness.

9. EMPRESS AGRIPPINA TO NERO..... 30

"Unhappy Agrippina"— A mother's love for an ungrateful and debased son.

10. PLINY, THE YOUNGER, TO TACITUS..... 33

"The Universe Seemed to Be Perishing"— An eyewitness describes the eruption of Vesuvius in which Pompeii and Herculaneum were destroyed.

11. MARCUS AURELIUS TO SOME WOMEN OF ROME 37

"The Lion May Be Subdued, But Woman—?"—A satire on woman.

12. EMPEROR AURELIAN TO QUEEN ZENOBIA.. 41

"Give Rome Your Jewels"— And a brilliant feminine defiance.

13. POPE GREGORY VII. TO HENRY IV. OF GERMANY 44

"Confess Your Sins"— This letter precipitated a struggle between Popes and temporal princes which fills many pages of history.

14. HENRY IV. TO POPE GREGORY 48

"Get Thee Down to Everlasting Damnation"— A cutting defiance.

15. A CRUSADER'S LETTER TO HIS WIFE 52

"Enemies of God"— Wherein is shown what unusual, and often, inconsistent things, men will do for their religion.

16. PETRARCH TO POSTERITY 56

"If I Only Lived Well, It Matters Little How I Talked"— If you were going to write a letter to posterity, what would you say?

17. MICHEL ANGELO TO THE POPE'S ARCHITECT 60

"The Whole of Florence for Security"— A genius may be immensely human.

18. MARTIN LUTHER TO HIS SON HANS 63

"A Wonderful Garden"— As a child how would you liked to have played in a garden like this?

19. POPE LEO X. TO DUKE GEORGE OF SAXONY 66

"Martin Luther, Son of Perdition"— The rising storm which brought the greatest religious Reformation in history.

20. A LETTER DESCRIBING A PLAGUE..... 69

"The People Are Perishing"— The Black Death — The truest description of the incredible horrors of a plague on record.

21. ANNE BOLEYN TO HENRY VIII..... 73

"My Doleful Prison in the Tower"— The dramatic plea of a beautiful and abused young wife.

22. WALTER, EARL OF ESSEX, TO LORD BURLEIGH, LORD TREASURER..... 76

"The Countess, Your Daughter"— How much should parents interfere in the marriage of their children?

23. MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS TO HER LOVER, THE EARL OF BOTHWELL..... 79

"This Burden of a Crown"— The love story of a beautiful and unfortunate queen.

24. QUEEN ELIZABETH TO MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS 83

"Your Cousin That Wisheth You a Better Mind"— The dramatic relations between the two most interesting women in English history.

25. SIR WALTER RALEIGH TO HIS WIFE..... 86

"Time and Death Call Me Away"— If you were sentenced to die, what kind of a letter would you write to your wife?

26. SIR FRANCIS BACON TO KING JAMES I..... 90

"Pity Me, My Sovereign, and Help Me"— The disgrace of one of the greatest men the world has ever known.

27. OLIVER CROMWELL TO COLONEL HACKER 94

"He That Prays and Preaches Best Will Fight Best"—"Ironsides."

28. DAVID HUME TO AN UNKNOWN FRIEND CONCERNING ROUSSEAU..... 97

"The Poor Man Is Mad"— In which is given a picture of the eccentricities of genius.

29. VOLTAIRE TO FREDERICK WILLIAM, PRINCE OF PRUSSIA 101

"If There Were No God It Would be Necessary to Invent One"— In which this great philosopher discusses God and the soul.

30. VOLTAIRE TO FREDERICK THE GREAT 105

"I Made You My Idol"— A friendship and a quarrel which became world famous.

31. THE EARL OF CHESTERFIELD TO HIS SON 109

Concerning Women — A letter not intended for publication.

32. DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON TO LORD CHESTERFIELD 113

"Now That I Am Great"— Famous at last, Johnson reviews his relations with one who had spurned him, with mixed feelings of pride and bitterness.

33. GEORGE WASHINGTON TO THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS 116

"On a Cold, Bleak Hill Without Clothes or Blankets"— Suffering at Valley Forge.

34. THOMAS PAINE TO GEORGE WASHINGTON 120

"A Hypocrite in Public Life"— An incredibly caustic epistle.

35. MADAME SEVIGNE TO HER DAUGHTER 124

For the Honor of His Trade — A beautiful narrative of an attendant who thinks that he has brought disgrace upon his trade, and how he makes compensation.

36. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TO STRAHAN..... 128
"My Enemy"— The shortest famous letter in American history.

37. NAPOLEON TO JOSEPHINE..... 130
"Ah! Josephine! Josephine!"— Love and the battlefield.

38. THOMAS JEFFERSON TO JOHN ADAMS..... 133
"Thorns on the Pillow of Age"— A beautiful tribute to friendship.

39. SIR WALTER SCOTT TO THE DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH 137
Napoleon At Waterloo — An intimate glimpse of Napoleon's behavior during the battle.

40. JANE WELSH CARLYLE TO THOMAS CARLYLE 141
"Dearer Than Any Earthly Creature"— A narrative of interest to every husband and wife.

41. JOHN KEATS TO FANNIE BRAWNE..... 144
"I Am Glad There Is a Grave"— A pathetic love-letter, revealing one of the greatest of all love tragedies.

42. EDGAR ALLAN POE TO JOHN ALLAN..... 148

"My Heart Was Breaking"— Concerning Poe's relations with his foster father — Youth and genius.

43. LONGFELLOW TO A LITTLE GIRL..... 152

"Edith, Alice and Allegra"— Why all children love this great poet.

44. THOMAS HUXLEY TO CHARLES DARWIN... 155

"I Am Sharpening Up My Claws"— Evolution, the "monkey theory," and the spirit of science.

45. ABRAHAM LINCOLN TO GENERAL HOOKER 158

"Go Forth and Give Us Victories"— The original manuscript of this war letter sold for $10,000 a few years ago.

46. ABRAHAM LINCOLN TO MRS. BIXBY..... 161

"The Altar of Freedom"— The most famous letter ever written by an American.

47. PRINCESS ALICE TO QUEEN VICTORIA..... 165

"God Bless You, My Own Mama"— The faithfulness of an ideal princess to a wonderful queen — The real human qualities and experiences of royalty.

48. THE KAISER TO THE CZAR 169
"The Yellow Peril"— Was the War Lord a friend of the weak Czar, or only playing a game?

49. WALTER HINES PAGE TO ARTHUR W. PAGE 173
"The Curtains Are Drawn and the Music Is Muffled"— A classic description of a war weary world.

50. WOODROW WILSON TO ROBERT LANSING 177
"Is It True?"— The letter which resulted in Lansing's resignation as Secretary of State, creating an international sensation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For special permission to use copyrighted material grateful acknowledgement is made to the following:

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY: *For Longfellow's letter to Emily A, "Life of Longfellow"; Michelangelo's letter to the Pope's Architect, "Michelangelo, a Record of His Life as Told in His Letters," edited by Robert W. Carden; Walter Hines Page's letter to Arthur W. Page, "Life and Letters of Walter Hines Page," by Burton J. Kendrick.*

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS: *For translations of Gregory VII.'s letter to Henry IV. and Henry IV.'s letter to Gregory VII., from "Source Book of Medieval History," by Thatcher and McNeal.*

GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN, LTD., LONDON: *For a letter describing a plague, from "The Black Death," by Johannes Nohl.*

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS, NEW YORK: *For Petrarch's "Letter to Posterity," from "Selections of Correspondence of Petrarch," by James Harvey Robinson.*

D. APPLETON & COMPANY, NEW YORK: *For Thomas Huxley's letter to Charles Darwin, from "Charles Darwin, Autobiography," edited by his son, Francis Darwin.*

THE CENTURY COMPANY: *For use of the Lincoln letters.*

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA PRESS, PHILADELPHIA: *For a crusader's letter to his wife — Count Stephen to Adele — from "Letters of the Crusaders," by Munro, in "Translations & Reprints from the Original Sources of European History."*

HARPER & BROTHERS: *For Jane Welsh Carlyle's letter to Thomas Carlyle, from "Letters and Memorials of Jane Welsh Carlyle."*

THE UNITED LUTHERAN PUBLICATION HOUSE: *For Pope Leo X.'s letter to Duke George of Saxony, from "Correspondence of Luther," edited by Preserved Smith.*

THE VALENTINE MUSEUM, RICHMOND, VIRGINIA: *For Edgar Allan Poe's letter to John Allan, from "Edgar Allan Poe Letters."*

ISAAC DON LEVINE: *For the Kaiser's letter to the Czar, from "Letters from the Kaiser to the Czar," by Isaac Don Levine.*

* * *

Effort has been made to trace all copyrighted material to original sources; if any discrepancy has been made the author will make the necessary corrections.

FIFTY FAMOUS LETTERS OF HISTORY

I

SOCRATES TO KING OCHUS

An ill-clothed figure, with an ugly face, bulbous nose and large head, stood on the streets of Athens talking to a group of men. Everybody in the city knew this poor Athenian. All day in the market place he would stand and ask questions, leaving most people in a confused state of mind, for he seemed to throw doubt upon everything that they knew, even their gods. This man, whose name was Socrates, with all of his poverty and apparent idleness, was "the personification of the best and highest things in Greek genius." He had no desire for public office, yet his greatest interest was in the welfare of the state. The following letter to King Ochus reveals the character of the man:

"I Had Rather Go Afoot"

YOU proffer me part of your kingdom, and invite me to it, but that not so much to share with you in the government as to govern both your subjects and yourself. For my part, Lord Ochus, I have never yet

known how to command, and would no more undertake such a task, than pretend to play at dice without ever being taught. If others were of the same mind, we should doubtless have fewer troubles than we have, whereas now the confidence of those that are ignorant exceeds the ability of such as are skillful. Hence it comes that fortune is made yet greater than she really is whose folly increases her power. Besides, I know well that more honor and esteem is due to a King, than a private person, and as I had rather go afoot, than ride without skill to manage my horse, so shall I never take care to guild my days with glorious afflictions.

Farewell.

Socrates lived 469 – 399 B.C.

2

ALEXANDER THE GREAT TO DARIUS

A YOUNG *man, only twenty-three years of age, who had conquered more than half of the civilized world, was sitting in his tent reading a letter. The message was from Darius, the great king of the rich Persian dominions, whose army Alexander had practically destroyed a while before on the plains of Issus. Darius had managed to get together a remnant of his followers and did not stop running until he crossed the Euphrates. Then he organized another great army, larger than that of his pursuer. In this message he was admonishing the upstart from Macedonia for overrunning his kingdom. He did not even address Alexander as king. But fear of further conquest prompted him to offer Alexander half of his realm, with the Euphrates as a boundary, if he would return to Greece. General Parmenio, a wise old counsellor who had followed Phillip, Alexander's father, was urging the young king to accept the proffered terms of peace. Parmenio warned him of the great Persian fleet in his rear, of revolt and other dangers, if he advanced. But in his veins was the lust for power and a vision of a world empire opened before the eyes of the young con-*

queror. It was a decisive hour and the destiny of the world was lodged in Alexander's reply. He sent Darius the following letter:

"Call Me King"

DARIUS:

Darius (By whose name you are called), if history tell true, long ago laid waste all the Greek cities on the coast of the Hellespont; all the Ionian colonies on that side. Neither was he content with this, but passing the sea with a vast army, made a second invasion; but being overcome in sea fight, himself retreated; yet left his general Mardonius, who in his absence should spoil all Greece, lay waste the fruitful fields, and raze the flourishing cities. To this let me add the death of my father Phillip, whose murderers you basely corrupted and suborned with the promise of a great sum of money. Thus unjustly do you begin a war, and thus cowardly carry it on, by your endeavors to murder those basely whom you are afraid to encounter in the field; witness the one thousand talents you offered to any that should be my murderer, even when you were leading so great an army against me. The war therefore which at present I am engaged in, is in my own defense; and

the gods, by giving success to my arms, in conquering a great part of your empire, have manifested the justice of my cause. I have conquered you in the field; and though I am not bound by honor or gratitude, to grant you any request, yet I promise faithfully, if you come to me in the way your condition requires, I will set at liberty your wife and children, even without ransom. As a conqueror you have had experience; you shall see I know as well how to deal honorably with those I conquer. But if you doubt of your safety here I will promise that you shall have an escort to bring you and wait on you back. In the meantime whenever you shall have occasion to write Alexander, remember you write to him not only as a king, but also your king.

DARIUS *did not go to Alexander. They later met at Arbela in one of the decisive battles of history. Alexander, with fifty thousand men, completely destroyed Darius' power, defeating an army which has been variously estimated between five hundred thousand and a million men. By this great victory the balance of world power passed from the Persians to the Greeks and the young king had conquered the world.*

Alexander lived 356 – 323 B.C.

3

DIOGENES TO THE PEOPLE OF SYNOPE

DIOGENES, *the great cynic philosopher, made himself immortal by going about the streets of Athens with a lantern in broad daylight looking for an honest man. Some time before this he had been banished from his native city, Synope, because he had become involved in some financial matters in the banking business. He went to Athens, met the great philosopher Socrates, and became a cynic. Most of the time he begged his living, saying that a philosopher had as much right to ask the people to support him as any king did in levying taxes to support a royal palace. He regarded both as begging. Becoming very happy at Athens he wrote to the people of Synope the following letter:*

"I Choose to Be a Vagabond"

MY countrymen:

You have banished me, my countrymen, and I on the contrary desire that you be confined to your homes,

for while you inhabit Synope, I live at Athens. You spend your time with none but mercenary traders, while I converse daily with philosophers. You deal in nothing but vile merchandise, while I continually read both men and books. Pity me not then, but rather envy me in that being removed from you, I lead a much happier life than when I was with you. I then wallowed in all kinds of sloth and luxury; I now am obliged to labor for my living; I then lived at large, but now am confined to rules. What then hinders me from pitying you in your condition, men of Synope, in that having so great wealth you want knowledge, and in wanting that, want everything?

Your banishing me, I look upon with favor, and value your threats so little, that I had rather be accused than applauded by you. In a word, I would choose to be a vagabond all over the earth, before I would consent to live a wealthy, but unknown citizen of Synope.

Farewell.

DIOGENES TO ARISTIPPUS

ALEXANDER *the Great had heard of the great philosopher, Diogenes, and expressed a desire to see him. He had Aristippus write to Diogenes informing him of this desire. The following letter was written by Diogenes in reply:*

"I Am Subject to Nobody"

ARISTIPPUS:

You send me word that Alexander, King of Macedonia, has a great desire to see me. You did well to give him that title, for whatever the Macedonians may be, you know I am subject to nobody. If that prince has a mind to be acquainted with me, and my manner of life, let him come hither, for I shall always think Athens as far distant from Macedon as Macedon is from Athens.

Farewell.

ALEXANDER *and Diogenes met later at Corinth where a famous interview took place. The King opened the conversation with, "I am Alexander the Great." To which the*

philosopher answered, "And I am Diogenes, the cynic." Alexander then asked him what he could do to serve him. Diogenes replied, "You can stand out of my sunshine and not take from me what you cannot give me."

Alexander was greatly impressed by the independence and self-possession of the philosopher and is said to have remarked as he went away, "If I were not Alexander, I should wish to be Diogenes."

Tradition says that they both died on the same day. Alexander spent his life in grand robbery, Diogenes in vagabondage; the richest and the poorest; or might it not be reversed? Alexander thought that the greatest virtues were glory and splendor. Diogenes believed that to gain virtue one must avoid all physical pleasure.

4

CICERO TO JULIUS CÆSAR

During *the great conflict in Rome between Julius Cæsar and Pompey, both of whom were struggling for supreme power, Cicero found himself in a difficult position. By political party and conviction he favored Pompey. At the same time he wanted to help bring peace to his country. Cæsar was very anxious to have Cicero's support. "Still, I have no doubt," said Cæsar to a friend, "that he hates me bitterly." Cicero had once saved the nation by thwarting the conspiracy of Cataline, and for which he had been honored with the epithet, "The father of his country." He was an honest, noble figure; above all a patriot. He saw that the foundations of the Republic were about to give way, and he was doing all he could to save it. The following letter shows a great soul struggling in the midst of a turmoil which involved his personal friendship for Pompey and his love for his country:*

"A Pious, Good and Grateful Man"

THE letters Furnius brought me from you surprised me. . . . I confess I did not know what you meant by

favor and assistance. But hope led me to an agreeable imagination, that following the dictates of your wonderful and singular wisdom, you had some thought of negotiating a peace, and the concord and union of the city; whereupon I thought myself no improper person for a negotiation of that nature. And if you have in reality any thoughts of reconciling Pompey to you, and the Commonwealth, you could choose no one so proper as myself, who have always persuaded him and the Senate, as soon as I could, against a war; nor since they have taken up arms have I had my hand in their military expeditions.

I declared my opinion that the war was an invasion of you, against honors bestowed by the people of Rome. But as I then brought many over to your assistance, so at this time the dignity of Pompey moves me extremely.

Now many years have passed since I chose you two out from the other Romans as the justest objects of my esteem, and with whom I would enter into so intimate a friendship as I now enjoy with both of you.

This gives me the assurance to importune you with all the earnestness I can, that you would amidst your great cares, take this into consideration, and suffer me to be, and show myself, by your favor, a pious, good and grateful man, for the many obligations I have to

you. It extends to your faith and honors, and to the Commonwealth, that I be permitted to be the author of peace to both of you and concord to my country. The thanks I gave to you for the protection of Lentulus, as if my own safety had been in your care, I hope will convince you of my gratitude. But I beg you not to force me, at a time when I am studying to be grateful to you, to be ungrateful to Pompey.

No *lasting peace was made between Cæsar and Pompey. Cicero finally joined Pompey's forces, but upon defeat of the latter on the battlefield, the great orator threw himself at the mercy of Cæsar. Cæsar was usually generous to his enemies. He was generous to Cicero. No matter what his personal feelings might have been towards Cicero he had the political sense to realize that a very large number of the Romans had a great deal of respect for the noble orator, and felt indebted to him for the many services he had rendered the Republic. But he was killed a year after Cæsar's assassination, and his head and hands were nailed up in the Roman forum. Although he met death at the hands of Cæsar's friends, Octavian, Cæsar's adopted heir, made an effort to save him.*

Cicero lived 106 – 43 B.C.

5

BRUTUS AND CASSIUS TO MARK ANTONY

"The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
But in ourselves that we are underlings."

THUS *Cassius spurs Brutus on to the assassination of Julius Cæsar. These Roman gentlemen were somewhat surprised when Cæsar's friend, the romantic Mark Antony, then consul, took Cæsar's murder seriously to heart. The following letter from Brutus and Cassius is indicative of the temper of the time.*

"Think Not How Long Cæsar Lived, But How Little He Reigned"

WE have read your letters, much of a piece with your edict, outrageous, threatening and unworthy yourself and us. Mark Antony, we have no ways injured you, neither could we have thought you would have wondered at, as Praetors and men of quality, we should demand anything of the Consul.... Whereas you say,

you complained not of our levying soldiers, imposing tribute, mustering armies, and sending messengers beyond sea, we believe you, nevertheless we confess that we have never done any of these things. We rather wonder that having concealed these matters you could not now suppress your anger, which has carried you to such an extent that you cast in our teeth the death of Cæsar. How that can be defended we leave to your imagination. What the Praetors have done to maintain their liberty and property, by way of edict, is no sufficient cause for the Consul to threaten them with arms. It matters little that you should go about to frighten us, neither is it probable we, on any account whatever, would be frightened. Mark Antony does ill in endeavoring to enslave those very persons by whom he himself and the whole commonwealth have obtained freedom.

If we were any ways inclined to raise a civil war, your letters could be of no effect, since resolute persons who regard their liberty above all things, have little regard for threats. One would think that you should know that we cannot easily be provoked. Yet you perhaps believe that what we do proceeds from fear rather than choice. However, our desire is that as long as the commonwealth may be free, you should therein enjoy both honor and grandeur. We do not intend any en-

mity toward you, yet you must give us leave to enjoy our liberty more than your amity.

Consider well what enterprise you are about to undertake, and what force you have to support it. Think not how long Cæsar lived, but how little he reigned. (Cæsar reigned supreme for only four years.) We beg of the gods that your proceedings may be beneficial to the commonwealth, and if otherwise, we likewise pray that they may not be too prejudicial to yourself.

Farewell.

The careers of Brutus and Cassius came to an end in the same year, 42 B.C.

6

HEROD THE GREAT TO AUGUSTUS CÆSAR

MARK ANTONY *became so infatuated with Cleopatra that he forgot himself and Rome and lost the rulership of his country. Herod the Great (father of the Herod referred to in the Gospels), King of the Jews, owed his throne to Antony. When Augustus Cæsar defeated Antony at the battle of Actium Herod's throne was at the mercy of Augustus. The following letter from Herod to Augustus reveals a faithfulness that is truly inspiring, at the same time gives us an interesting glimpse into the relationship between Antony and the "Serpent of the Nile," the fascinating Cleopatra:*

"My Friend and His Wicked Woman"

I MUST acknowledge, O Augustus, that I have all along been a faithful friend to Antony, and that not only as my duty obliged me, but as my gratitude moved me, having received many favors from him,

especially the kingdom I enjoy. This I would have made known to him in person, had not I been prevented in that design through the envy of Cleopatra, and the invasions of the Arabs. Thus you may see necessity only, and not fear, withstood my meeting you in the field in his favor. Antony, however, has no reason to complain of me; for though I could not come myself to his aid, yet did I send an army and good store of provisions. Neither ought you to esteem me ungrateful in the Attic war, since I there did all that became me, and all that could be expected from me. I would rather choose to declare myself an enemy to Cæsar than not appear a friend to Antony, for which I doubt not but to merit rather your approbation than displeasure.

With you merit is ever safe, while vice and ingratitude are ever in danger. You may observe, O Cæsar, that I never abandoned my master Antony, whilst he was in prosperity, neither do I fly him, now he is vanquished and dead.

You have not only conquered him with your invincible legions and your councils, but likewise with your manners. His Queen Cleopatra overcame him, Egyptian beauty betrayed him, and Alexandrian luxury destroyed him. He chose rather to be conquered with Cleopatra than to be a conqueror without her. I would

have fain persuaded him to have killed her, and to have taken timely care of himself, but he would never harken to me. I proffered him comfort in his afflictions, I proffered him forces, and myself for a comparison of his fortune, but all had no effect upon him. The witchcraft of Cleopatra had taken too great possession of him, and my advice was wholly neglected.

Thus both Antony and I are conquered; he by Cleopatra and I by him. He could never be brought to forsake that wicked woman, nor I be induced to forsake his interest.

The kingdom he gave me I cannot now pretend a right to, unless I have it confirmed by you; therefore, when I come to ask that favor, I shall leave the ensigns of royalty behind me, but not the courage to justify what I have done for my friend. Judge of this as you please; however let the construction be what it will, which you shall put upon my proceedings, I shall still have this to comfort me, that I never abandoned my friend, either living or dead.

Farewell.

In *his reply to this letter, Augustus gives Herod the kingdom of the Jews, saying in part:* "He That Can Be So Good a Friend Is Equal to the Greatest of Conquerors.... For after I had conquered him (Antony) in battle, I should have had cause to blush, if I had suffered him to exceed me in generosity."

Herod lived 62 – 4 B.C.

7

AUGUSTUS CÆSAR TO ROMAN BACHELORS

LIKE *the poor, bachelors are always with us. The Roman Empire's population was being depleted. Wars against the barbarians, as well as the general habits of the Romans, contributed to this situation. Augustus Cæsar, one of the greatest of Roman rulers, unlike many emperors, had his country's welfare sincerely at heart. This interesting and scathing letter to the Roman bachelors, however effective it was at the moment, did not save Rome from its decline and fall.*

"Virgins of Rome Are Neglected"

WRITING to you I am not only at a loss what title to give you, but also find in myself different sentiments from those I usually have when I speak to Romans. As to the first of these, I cannot, I cannot think it proper to call you men, since you give no proof of your

manhood, neither can I style you citizens, inasmuch as all your endeavors are directly levelled at the destruction of the city. Nor can I name you Romans, who aim at the abolishing of that very name....

For consider, I beseech you, should your example pass into a mode, with the rest of men, what would become of the whole progeny of mankind? And reflect that by the source of this wickedness, you will assuredly be thought guilty of universal murder. This is the most you can hope from the success of your folly. ...'Tis punishment, not pardon, we give to robbers, spoilers of temples, murderers, and such like heinous offenders.... And yet robbery, sacrilege, murder, and the horrid scroll of monstrous crimes, when compared with yours, lose more than half their blackness. You are guilty of impiety toward your forefathers, in conspiring the abolition of their honors, and their name. You are guilty of sacrilege by robbing the immortal gods (in suppressing the manifestation of their power in your race) of their victim most noble in itself and most agreeable to them, human nature; and by that one deed overthrow all their temples and all their altars and utterly dissolve their cities....

I would have you reflect, O, bachelors! (if you ever give yourselves leave to think) whether our great and holy founder, Romulus, will not have abundant

cause of indignation against you . . . and what will his companions in establishing this city, think you, report of you above, while the native virgins of Rome are neglected by you? . . . If what I say offends you, continue not in that practice, which provokes me to deliver myself in terms so disagreeable, and be assured that if what I now write gives you any pain, your actions must of necessity give me and all true Romans no less. . . .

Shall I set free the slaves and call in our allies to supply us with people? I am ashamed to think of, and much more to be obliged to write what I do. . . . How can I with justice discharge that trust committed to me in my government, if I perpetually suffer your numbers to be diminished? . . . Be advised, and

Farewell.

Augustus reigned between 31 B.C. and 14 A.D.

8

ST. PAUL TO TIMOTHY

IT *has been said that the greatness of a man is determined by the influences for good that he sets in motion. Beginning his work for a religious sect when a greater part of the world was against him, losing his family, friends, and even his reputation, yet by his undying love for a cause, by the strength of his intellect and the force of his will, St. Paul commanded a hearing, caused thrones to bow before his influence and lifted the Cross of Jesus above the Roman Eagle. We can see how a man will go forth in a blaze of glory and give his life for his country. But here is a man who picked up the thread of a religion, and it so appealed to him that he wanted to give his life for others as part payment for the great joy which had come to him. He died daily for mankind through his sufferings. It is all very strange to some of us. At three different times he was flogged with Roman rods. Once he was stoned almost to death. Three times he was shipwrecked, and for a whole day and night floated upon the face of the deep. On three different occasions he looked death in the face without wincing: once when the mob was about to kill him in the Temple; once when his ship was wrecked on the Mediterranean, and again when he sat in the prison in Rome wait-*

ing the end. "When I am weak I am strong," he said. When he became old he had only an old coat and a few books. But when he died he left an influence that was destined to change the course of civilization. His second letter to Timothy, written from Rome, when Paul was brought before Nero the second time, gives us the picture of a man who has given his strength, his days, for a noble cause; he has loved deeply, fought hard and suffered long; he has grown old in the service of His Master; material rewards he knows not. Tired, spent, yet a smile lights his careworn face; he stands erect once more, inspired by the consciousness that he has done his best; he looks back upon the world which has buffeted him and drops from his heart the greatest exultation of success that has ever been given to mankind:

"I Have Fought a Good Fight,
I Have Finished My Course,
I Have Kept the Faith"

PAUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus, to Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father, and Christ Jesus our Lord....

I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the gentiles. For the which cause I also suffer

these things: (referring to his many tribulations) nevertheless *I am not ashamed:* for I know whom I have believed....

The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and *was not ashamed of my chain:* but, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me. The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.

Thou, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. Thou therefore *endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ....* Study to show thyself approved unto God, *a workman that needeth not be ashamed,* rightly dividing the word of truth.... In a great house there are not only *vessels of gold and silver,* but also of wood and earth; and some to honor and some to dishonor....

This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection. *...Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth....*

But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me....

I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ... preach the word... for the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine.... But watch thou in all things, *endure afflictions,* do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:* henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness....

Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me: for Demas hath forsaken me, *having loved this present world,* and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. Take Mark and bring him with thee.... *The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments.* Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works....

At my first answer *no man stood with me, but all men forsook me.* I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge....

And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

It *is supposed that St. Paul was executed, and was buried in or near Rome.*

9

EMPRESS AGRIPPINA TO HER SON, NERO

NERO *is the blackest of all the villainous rulers in history. He started well, but ended his own life in disgrace. It was through the influence of his strong-minded mother, Agrippina, that Nero was made emperor, instead of a step-son, Britannicus, who was entitled to the emperorship. His suspicious and cowardly nature led him to put to death his old teacher, Seneca, many innocent and worthy men, his own wife; and, to crown his infamy, he even had his own mother assassinated. On hearing that the Senate had voted his death, he went into hiding, and theatrically stabbing himself, said before passing away, "What a pity for such an artist to die!" The following letter from his mother to him, after hearing that she had been accused of wanting to take his life, is unique among human documents:*

"Unhappy Agrippina!"

I WONDER not that barren Silana should have no sense of maternal affections. She that never bore a son,

might well be ignorant how to bear the loss of one. Nature renders those objects either hateful or indifferent, which do not strike our senses.... I am amazed that the utmost magic of words could make you give the least credit to such barbarous inhumanity.... Dost thou not know, O Son, the affection all mothers naturally bear their children? Our love is without bounds, being incessantly fed by that tenderness which is incredible to all but ourselves. Nothing ought to be more dear to us than what we have purchased with the risk of our lives; nothing more valuable than what we have undergone so great grief and pain to procure. These are so sharp and intolerable, that were it not for the prospect of a happy birth, which makes us unmindful of our agonies, generation would soon be at an end. Can'st thou be ignorant that nine full months I have carried thee in my bowels, and nourished thee with my blood? How likely is it then that I would destroy that very darling I had taken so much care to bring into the world? It may be the just gods took offense at my over fondness of thee, and made use of this way to punish me....

Unhappy Agrippina! Thou art suspected of a crime which nobody could think thee guilty of.... What signifies the title of empress to me if I am supposed guilty of what the basest of women would abhor?... Un-

happy those that depend upon the breath of the court. The wisest of people are not secure from tempests in that harbor. There even a calm is dangerous. But why blame the court? Can that be the cause of my being suspected of parricide? ... Tell me to what end should I plot against thy life? To plunge myself in a worse fate! That's not likely; what hopes then could induce me to build upon thy ruin? I know the lust of empire often corrupts the laws of nature, that justice has no sword to punish such as offend in that respect, and that ambition never takes notice of wrong so long as it succeeds in its aim.... Nay, to what Deity could I have recourse for absolution after I had been guilty of so black a deed? ...

What impossibilities have I not surmounted to put the laurel on thy temples? But I offend thy gratitude by remembering thee of my services. My innocence ought not to defend itself, but to rely wholly on thy justice.

Farewell.

Nero was Emperor of Rome, 54–68 A.D.

10

PLINY, THE YOUNGER, TO TACITUS, ON THE ERUPTION OF VESUVIUS

The name VESUVIUS *has meant horror, despair, poetic wonderment and historic grandeur through nearly two thousand years. Natives still fear its eruptions, poets sing of the cities which it has destroyed, and historians are forever busy trying to find traces of the ancients who lived in Herculaneum and Pompeii. These two cities were destroyed by the eruption of Vesuvius in the summer of 79 A.D. It is said that liquid mud covered the buildings while people were sitting in the theater. The following letter written by Pliny, the younger, to the historian Tacitus, has come down to us as a classic from the ancient times. It was written several years after the eruption.*

"The Universe Seemed to Be Perishing"

THERE had been noticed for many days before a trembling of the earth, which had caused, however, but little fear, because it is not unusual in Campania.

But that night it was so violent that one thought that everything was being not merely moved but absolutely overturned. . . . It was now seven o'clock in the morning, but the daylight was still faint and doubtful. The surrounding buildings were now shattered, that in the place where we were, which though open was small, the danger that they might fall on us was imminent and unmistakable. A panic-stricken crowd followed us. They preferred the ideas of their own — in a moment of terror this has a certain look of prudence — and they pressed on us and drove us on. . . .

Then we had to endure the sight of many marvelous things, many dreadful things. The carriages which we had directed to be brought out moved about in opposite directions, though the ground was perfectly level; even when scotched with stones they did not remain in the same place. Beside this, we saw the sea retire into itself, seeming, as it were, to be driven back by the trembling movements of the earth. The shore had distinctly advanced, and many marine animals were high and dry upon the sands. Behind us was a dark and dreadful cloud, which, as it was broken with rapid zigzag, revealed behind it variously-shaped masses of flame; these last were like sheet-lightning though on a larger scale. . . .

Ashes now began to fall — still, however, in small

quantities. I looked behind me; a dense dark mist seemed to be following us, spreading itself over the country like a cloud.... We had scarcely sat down (referring to his mother, who was fleeing with him; becoming almost exhausted, they stopped to rest a moment) when night was upon us,— not such as we have when there is no moon, or when the sky is cloudy, but such as there is in some closed room when the lights are extinguished. You might hear the shrieks of women, the monotonous wailing of the children, the shouts of men. Many were raising their voices, and seeming to recognize by the voices that replied, parents, children, husbands or wives. Some were loudly lamenting their own fate, others the fate of those dear to them. Some even prayed for death in their fear of what they prayed for. Many lifted their hands in prayer to the gods; more were convinced that there were now no gods at all, and that the final endless night of which we have heard had come upon the world.

It now grew somewhat light again; we felt sure that this was not the light of day, but a proof that fire was approaching us; then came darkness again, and a thick heavy fall of ashes. Again and again we stood up and shook them off; otherwise we should have been covered by them, and even crushed by the weight. I might boast that not a sigh, not a word of wanting in

1357349

courage escaped me, even in the midst of peril so great; had I not been convinced that I was perishing in company with the universe, and the universe with me? — a miserable and yet a mighty solace in death. At last the black mist that I had spoken of seemed to shade off into smoke or cloud, and to roll away. Then came genuine daylight, and the sun shone out with a lurid light, such as it is wont to have in an eclipse.

Our eyes, which had not yet recovered from the effects of fear, saw everything changed, everything covered with ashes as if with snow. We returned to Misenum, and, after refreshing ourselves as best we could, spent a night of anxiety in mingled hope and fear....

Pliny

II

MARCUS AURELIUS
TO SOME WOMEN OF ROME

A FEW *clever women, for once at least, found a match for their wit in the great philosopher and Emperor of Rome, Marcus Aurelius. Rudyard Kipling, who wrote "The Female of the Species," a poem which aroused the ire of the women of two continents a few years ago, must have been familiar with Aurelius' letter to these presumptuous ladies of Rome. After satirizing the great philosopher, they had the audacity to ask of him a favor. He surprised them by granting it. His reply to a certain question which they propounded to him was the occasion for one of the greatest satires on women that has ever been written. It follows:*

"The Lion May Be Subdued,
But Woman—?"

WHILST I continue at Rhodes, improving myself in the art of oratory, you, I understand, have made and

played a farce upon me at Rome.... It seems you presented me after different manners. You gave me a book turned upside down, to signify I was an absurd philosopher. You made me go with my tongue lolling out to show I was a bold speaker. You planted horns upon my head to make me pass for a common cuckold. You put a trayling pike in my hand to denote me a cowardly leader. You represented me with no beard as an effeminate person. And lastly, bound a handkerchief about my eyes to make me look as if I had been a condemned criminal....

You made a statue with feet of straw, legs of wood, thighs of brass, belly of horn, arms of pitch, hands of paste, head of plaster, asses' ears, serpents' eyes, cats' teeth, a scorpion's tongue, hair of vine roots and forehead of lead.... Now after these affronts you put upon me, I cannot but wonder how you could have had the assurance to send Fulvius Fabritius to ask me a question in your names? Yet to show you your harmless satire does not in the least affect me, I will gratify your request, though you have so little deserved it of me. Your question is whether I have found in all the course of my reading, of what, by whom, where, when and how the first woman was made? ...

The Egyptians held that by the overflowing of the Nile, certain fat clots of earth being thrown upon the

shore, and there left, upon the reflux of the sun, by its prolific virtue impregnated them, and turned them to worms, one of which afterwards became a woman.... Woman was at first irregular in birth so has she been ever since.... Be the lion never so wild, at length he may be brought to be led by his keeper; be the bull never so fierce, at last he may be taken by the horns. The horse in time submits to the bit, and the young colt to the saddle, only woman, the most perverse of all animals, never loses either her imperiousness or disobedience. The gods have made men wise, and endowed beasts with natural instinct, yet are neither of them able to defend themselves against the subtleties of woman. Her obstinacy also is not less than her cunning; for if she has a mind to stay, no spur can make her go forward; and if on the contrary she inclines to go, no reins can hold her in.... Where once she entertains an opinion all the arguments of the world shall not beat her out of it....

According to the great variety of animals, nature has placed their strength in different parts of their bodies. The eagle has hers in her beak, the unicorn in his horn, the snake in his tail, the bull in his head, the bear in his paws, the horse in his breast, the dog in his teeth, the boar in his tusks, the wooddove in her wings, and woman in her tongue....

Now, though I have hitherto been so severe upon the fair sex in general, yet must I except all those Roman ladies who have any title to the character of good, whereof there are many. My design is only to expose such as are bad.... I advise all young men, beseech all that are old, rouse up the faculties of the wise, and instruct the simple to beware and fly from women of an ill-fame as they would from a common pestilence. ... For as all other harms can be escaped by abstaining from them, *women alone can be avoided by flying them*. This from Marcus Aurelius.

Farewell.

12

THE EMPEROR AURELIAN TO QUEEN ZENOBIA, AND HER REPLY

Zenobia, Queen of Palmyra, a city state in Persia, was famed for her virtue in private life. A brave, capable and determined ruler, she defied Aurelian, Emperor of Rome, when he demanded that she deliver her city to him. Although the Romans usually heaped praise upon the Emperor who extended the Roman territory, in this instance they ridiculed their Emperor for his ungallant attitude toward the popular Queen of the East. His letter to her follows:

"Give Rome Your Jewels"

WHAT I now require you ought to have done long since of your own accord. I command you to surrender the city, and thereupon promise both you and yours your lives, but not your liberty. You, Zenobia, and your children must be content to go, where I and the most

august senate of Rome think fit to place you. Your jewels, gold, silver and other riches, must all be confiscated to the Roman treasury. Your subjects alone will be freed from captivity, and have their privilege confirmed to them.

A WOMAN'S REPLY

NO man ever yet presumed to command what thou hast done. Bravery, Aurelian, is the only means to bring about our ends in war. Thou requirest me to surrender this, my city of Palmyra, as if thou couldst be ignorant that my ancestor, Cleopatra, chose rather to die with the character of a queen than live a slave, of how great quality soever, to thy predecessor, Augustus.

We wait for the succors of the Persians. The Saracens arm for us; the Armenians have declared in our favor; a band of highwaymen have defeated thy army in Syria. Judge, then, what thou art to expect when all these forces shall arrive. Thou wilt then assuredly alter thy tone, and not imperiously command me thus to give up what is my birthright, *as if thou wert absolute disposer of the universe.*

In *writing to his friend, Mucapor, Aurelian said: "Her fear and despair between them make her wild, and furnish her with more courage than can be found in all our army. 'Tis inexpressible what vast flights of arrows, darts and stones she sends us every moment."*

In spite of this brilliant and stubborn resistance, Aurelian finally conquered the great Queen, bringing her to Rome a captive. He presented her with large possessions in the villa of Hadrian, where she spent her life.

Aurelian reigned 270 – 275 A.D.

13

POPE GREGORY VII.
TO HENRY IV. OF GERMANY

HILDEBRAND, *son of a Tuscany laborer, a monk while yet a youth, the Pope's chaplain at twenty-one, and for eighteen years directing the policy of the papacy under five successive popes, more than once refusing the opportunity to become pope, but at last, 1073, yielding to the wishes of the people of Rome, becoming Pope Gregory VII—this unusual man's life presents one of the most remarkable stories in history. He had a frail body, but a fiery soul and possessed great ability as a leader and statesman. He established the temporal power of the papacy on such a basis that he and the later popes could depose emperors at will. Henry IV. of Germany had been guilty of a number of irregularities as a supposedly Christian ruler. The Pope was desirous of bringing the straying sheep back into the fold. Henry did not like Gregory's assumption of temporal power. It was a war of words that started a contest between popes and emperors which lasted for several hundred years, ending in the Pope shutting himself up as a "prisoner of the Vatican," and released only recently by a treaty between Pope Pius and Mussolini. The following letter to Henry, and*

Henry's stinging reply (the next letter in this series) form an epistolary record which will stand for ages. In this letter Gregory asserts his power, through Peter, over temporal princes.

"Confess Your Sins"

December, 1075

GREGORY, bishop, servant of the servants of God, to Henry, the king, greeting and apostolic benediction, — that is, if he be obedient to the apostolic see as is becoming in a Christian king:

It is with some hesitation that we have sent you our apostolic benediction, knowing that for all our acts as pope we must render an account to God, the severe judge. It is reported that you have willingly associated with men who have been excommunicated by decree of the Pope and sentence of a synod. If this be true, you are well aware that you can receive the blessing neither of God nor of the Pope until you have driven them from you and have compelled them to do penance, and have also yourself sought absolution and forgiveness for your transgressions with due repentance and good works. Therefore we advise you that, if you realize your guilt in this matter, you immediately confess to some pious bishop, who shall absolve you with our

permission, prescribing for you penance in proportion to the fault, and who shall faithfully report to us by letter, with your permission, the nature of the penance required.

We wonder, moreover, that you should continue to assure us by letter and messengers of your devotion and humility; that you should call yourself our son and the son of the holy mother Church, obedient in the faith, sincere in love, diligent in devotion; and that you should commend yourself to us with all zeal and love and reverence — whereas in fact you are constantly disobeying the canonical and apostolic decrees in important matters of the faith.... Since you confess yourself a son of the Church, you should treat with more honor the head of the Church, that is, St. Peter, the prince of the apostles. If you are one of the sheep of the Lord, you have been entrusted to him by divine authority, for Christ said to him: "Peter, feed my sheep," (John XXI:16); and again, "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven" (Matthew XVI:19). And since we, although an unworthy sinner, exercise his authority by divine will, the words which you address to us are in reality addressed to him. And although we read or hear only

the words, he sees the heart from which the words proceed. Therefore your highness should be very careful that no insincerity be found in your words and messages to us; and that you show due reverence, not to us, indeed, but to omnipotent God, in those things which especially make for the advance of the Christian faith and the well-being of the Church....

But from what you have since done and decreed, it is evident how little you care for our warnings, or for the observance of justice.... But since we hope that, while the long-suffering patience of God still invites you to repent, you may become wiser and your heart may be turned to obey the commands of God, we warn you with fatherly love that... you should consider how dangerous it is to place your honor above His.

14

HENRY IV. OF GERMANY TO POPE GREGORY VII.

For *writing the following letter to Pope Gregory, Henry IV. was excommunicated. It was in answer to Gregory's letter to him requesting the King to confess his sins. Henry's friends fell away, unable to stand before the terrible papal bull. The King hurried to meet the Pope at Conossa, who was already on his way across the Alps. Gregory refused to see Henry, and the latter stood barefoot in the snow for three days, wearing a penitent's garb. Admitted finally into the presence of the Pope, Henry threw himself at Gregory's feet crying, "Spare me, Holy Father, spare me!" Gregory was moved to tears and gave Henry the kiss of peace. In this letter Henry hints at the irregularity of the election of Gregory to the head of the church. Gregory was elected Pope by the people of Rome, but this action was later approved by the cardinals. Here is the fiery epistle which made this great chapter in history:*

"Get Thee Down to Everlasting Damnation"

January 24, 1076

HENRY, king not by usurpation, but by the holy ordination of God, to Hildebrand, not pope, but false monk.

This is the salutation which you deserve, for you have never held any office in the Church without making it a source of confusion and a curse to Christian men, instead of an honor and a blessing. To mention only the most obvious causes out of many, you have not only dared to lay hands on the Lord's anointed, the archbishops, bishops, and priests, but you have scorned them and abused them, as if they were ignorant servants not fit to know what their master was doing. This you have done to gain favor with the vulgar crowd. You have declared that the bishops know nothing and that you know everything; but if you have such great wisdom you have used it not to build but to destroy. Therefore we believe that St. Gregory, whose name you have presumed to take, had you in mind when he said: "The heart of the prelate is puffed up by the abundance of subjects, and he thinks himself more powerful than all others." All this we have en-

dured because of our respect for the papal office, but you have mistaken our humility for fear, and have dared to make an attack upon the royal and imperial authority which we received from God. You have threatened to take it away, as if we had received it from you, and as if the Empire and kingdom were in your disposal and not in the disposal of God. Our Lord Jesus Christ has called us to the government of the Empire, but He never called you to the rule of the Church. This is the way you have gained advancement in the Church; through craft you have obtained wealth; through wealth you have obtained favor; through favor, the power of the sword; and through the power of the sword, the papal seat, which is the seat of peace; and then from the seat of peace you have expelled peace. For you have incited subjects to rebel against their prelates by teaching them to despise the bishops, their rightful rulers.... St. Paul, who said that even an angel from heaven should be accursed who taught any other than the true doctrine, did not make an exception in your favor, to permit you to teach false doctrines. For he says, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." (Galatians 1:8). Come down, then, from that apostolic seat which you have obtained by vio-

lence; for you have been declared accursed by St. Paul for your false doctrines, and have been condemned by us and our bishops for your evil rule. Let another ascend the throne of St. Peter, one who will not use religion as a cloak of violence, but will teach the life-giving doctrine of that prince of the apostles. I, Henry, king by the grace of God, with all my bishops, say unto you: "Get thee down, get thee down to everlasting damnation!"

THIS *mighty struggle between these two princes ended tragically. After some time Gregory was driven from Rome, and died soon in the Southern part of Italy, exclaiming sadly, "I have loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore I die in exile."*

Henry had a similar fate. He quarreled with Gregory's successor; his sons stirred up revolts against him; his old age was full of trouble; for years he was a prisoner, and died in 1106, "broken-hearted, in the midst of defeat and shame."

15

A CRUSADER'S LETTER TO HIS WIFE

THERE are two things which will suffice to move heaven and earth: religion and love. Men and women have done the impossible for both in the ages past; they will continue to do the impossible for religion and love in the ages to come. Thousands of men, women and children lost their lives in the crusades to the Holy Lands, in an effort to wrest Palestine from the hands of the Turks. Pope Urban's fiery eloquence at a great gathering of French nobles at Clermont in 1095 thrilled the multitude to a frenzy of enthusiasm, when he "preached a war of the Cross to recover the Holy Sepulcher from the infidel." They caught up his cry: "God wills it! God wills it!" and for two hundred years the Crusades were a continuous movement, hordes of Christians moving slowly, laboriously, often disastrously, toward Asia. The following letter from Count Stephen to his wife is a historical gem and the most famous of all the letters written by the Crusaders.

"Enemies of God"

Date: 1097

COUNT STEPHEN to Adele, his sweetest and most amiable wife, to his dear children, and to all his vassals of all ranks,—his greeting and blessing....

We have been continually advancing for twenty-three weeks toward the home of our Lord Jesus. You may know for certain, my beloved, that of gold, silver, and many other kind of riches I now have twice as much as your love had assigned to me when I left....

I delight to tell you, dearest, what happened to us during Lent. Our princes had caused a fortress to be built before a certain gate which was between our camp and the sea. For the Turks, coming out of this gate daily, killed some of our men on their way to the sea. The city of Antioch is about five leagues distant from the sea. For this purpose they sent the excellent Bohemond and Raymond, count of St. Gilles, to the sea with only sixty horsemen, in order that they might bring mariners to aid in this work. When, however, they were returning to us with these mariners, the Turks collected an army, fell suddenly upon our two leaders, and forced them to a perilous flight. In that

unexpected fight we lost more than 500 of our foot soldiers — to the glory of God. Of our horsemen, however, we lost only two, for certain.

On the same day, in order to receive our brethren with joy, and entirely ignorant of their misfortunes, we went out to meet them. When, however, we approached the above-mentioned gate of the city, a mob of foot soldiers and horsemen from Antioch, elated by the victory which they had won, rushed upon us in the same manner. Seeing these, our leaders went to the camp of the Christians to order all to be ready to follow us into battle. In the meantime our men gathered together and the scattered leaders, namely, Bohemond and Raymond, with the remainder of their army came up and told of the great misfortune which they had suffered.

Our men, full of fury at these most evil tidings, prepared to die for Christ and, deeply grieved for their brethren, rushed upon the wicked Turks. They, enemies of God, and of us, hastily fled before us and attempted to enter the city. But by God's grace the affair turned out very differently; for, when they tried to cross a bridge built over the great river Moscholum, we followed them as closely as possible, killed many before they reached the bridge, forced many into the river, all of whom were killed, and we also slew many

upon the bridge and very many at the narrow entrance to the gate. I am telling you the truth, my beloved, and you may be assured that in this battle we killed thirty emirs, that is, princes, and three hundred other Turkish nobles, not counting the remaining Turks and pagans. Indeed the number of Turks and Saracens killed is reckoned at 1230, but of ours we did not lose a single man.

On the following day (Easter), while my chaplain Alexander was writing this letter in great haste, a party of our men lying in wait for the Turks fought a successful battle with them and killed sixty horsemen, whose heads they brought to the army.

These which I write to you are only a few things, dearest, of the many which we have done.... You will certainly see me just as soon as I can possibly return home.

Farewell.

16

PETRARCH TO POSTERITY

THE *vanity in us all makes us want to leave something to be remembered by when we are gone. This was especially characteristic of Petrarch and the scholars of the Renaissance. Petrarch was the greatest scholar of this period. He was intensely human, as the following letter will show. Some peculiar whim moved him to write this letter to posterity. The idea of the letter itself, and the wit and subtle humor of its passages, have made it one of the world's greatest epistles.*

"If I Only Lived Well, It Matters Little How I Talked"

GREETING — It is possible that some word of me have come to you, though even this is doubtful, since an insignificant and obscure name will scarcely penetrate far in either time or space. If, however, you should

have heard of me, you may desire to know what manner of man I was....

To begin with myself, then, the utterances of men concerning me will differ widely, since in passing judgment almost every one is influenced not so much by truth as by preference, and good and evil report alike know no bounds. I was, in truth, a poor mortal like yourself, neither very exalted in my origin, nor, on the other hand, of the most humble birth, but belonging, as Augustus Cæsar says of himself, to an ancient family. As to my disposition, I was not naturally perverse or wanting in modesty, however, the contagion of evil associations may have corrupted me. My youth was gone before I realized it; I was carried away by the strength of manhood; but a riper age brought me to my senses and taught me, by experience, the truth I had long before read in books, that youth and pleasure are vanity — nay, that the Author of all ages and times permits us miserable mortals, puffed up with emptiness, thus to wander about, until finally, coming to a tardy consciousness of our sins, we shall learn to know ourselves....

I have always expressed an extreme contempt for wealth....Nothing displeases me more than display....

I struggled in my younger days with a keen but

constant and pure attachment, and would have struggled with it longer had not the sinking flame been extinguished by death — premature and bitter, but salutary. (Thought to be a reference to his beloved Laura.) I should be glad to be able to say that I had always been entirely free from irregular desires, but I should lie if I did so.... As I approached the age of forty... I not only abruptly threw off my bad habits, but even the very recollection of them.... This I mention as among the greatest of my blessings, and I render thanks to God, who freed me....

I have taken pride in others, never myself, and however insignificant I have been, I have always been still less important in my own judgment. My anger has very often injured myself, but never others. I have always been most desirous of honorable friendships, and have faithfully cherished them.... In my familiar associations with kings and princes, and in my friendship with noble personages, my good fortune has been such as to invite envy. But it is the cruel fate of those who are growing old that they can commonly only weep for friends who have passed away. The greatest kings of this age have loved and courted me. They may know why; I certainly do not.... I fled however from many of those to whom I was greatly attached, and such was my innate love for liberty, that

I studiously avoided those whose very name seemed incompatible with the freedom that I loved....

I possessed a well-balanced, rather than a keen intellect....In order to forget my own times, I have constantly striven to place myself in spirit in other ages, and consequently I delighted in history....

My style, as many claimed, was clear and forcible, but to me it seemed weak and obscure....If only I lived well, it matters little to me how I talked....

Supposedly written in his 66th year, 1370.

17

MICHEL ANGELO
TO THE POPE'S ARCHITECT

MICHEL ANGELO *denied himself to such an extent, while doing sculptural work in Rome, that at one time he slept in one bed with three working men. But he spent most of his life in Rome alone. He never knew the love of woman. As an architect, engineer, sculptor, painter and poet, winning fame in all, he had little time for other things. That he also had an eye for finances is shown in his relations with Pope Julius II. The following letter, relating his difficulties with Julius, shows that he was very much human as well as a genius:*

"The Whole of Florence for Security"

Florence, May 2, 1506

MAESTRO Guliano, *Architect to the Pope.*

Guliano, I learn from a letter sent by you that the Pope was angry at my departure, that he is willing to place the money at my disposal and to carry out

what was agreed upon between us; also, that I am to come back and fear nothing.

As far as my departure is concerned, the truth is that on Holy Saturday I heard the Pope, speaking at table with a jeweler and the Master of the Ceremonies, say that he did not want to spend another baiocco on stones, whether small or large, which surprised me very much. However, before I set out I asked him for some of the money required for the continuance of my work. His Holiness replied that I was to come back again on Monday: and I went on Monday, and on Tuesday, and on Wednesday, and on Thursday — as His Holiness saw. At last, on the Friday morning, I was turned out, that is to say, I was driven away; and the person who turned me away said he knew who I was, but that such were his orders. Thereupon, having heard those words on the Saturday and seeing them afterwards put into execution, I lost all hope. But this alone was not the whole reason of my departure. There was also another cause, but I do not wish to write about it; enough that it made me think that, if I were to remain in Rome, my own tomb would be prepared before that of the Pope. This is the reason for my sudden departure.

Now you write to me on behalf of the Pope, and in similar manner you will read this letter to the Pope.

Give His Holiness to understand . . . that if he really wishes to have this tomb erected it would be well for him not to vex me as to where the work is to be done, provided that within the agreed period of five years it be erected in St. Peter's, on the site he shall choose, and that it be a beautiful work as I have promised; for I am persuaded that it will be a work without equal in all the world if it be carried out. (It was the tomb of Julius II.)

If His Holiness wishes to proceed, let him deposit the said money here in Florence with a person whose name I will communicate to you. . . . With regard to the aforesaid money and work, I will bind myself in any way His Holiness may direct, and I will furnish whatever security here in Florence he may require. Let it be what it may, I will give him full security, even though it be the whole of Florence. There is yet one thing I have to add: it is this, that the said work could not possibly be done for the price in Rome, but it could be done here because of the many conveniences which are available, such as could not be had in Rome. . . . I beg of you to let me have an answer, and quickly. I have nothing further to add.

Your Michel Angelo,
Sculptor, in Florence.

Michel Angelo lived 1475 - 1564.

18

MARTIN LUTHER TO HIS SON, HANS

Some of the finest gems in literature are letters of great persons to children. Martin Luther wrote a letter to his son in 1533, which has never been forgotten during all these generations. As a child how would you like to have lived in a garden like this?

The Wonderful Garden

GRACE and peace in Christ to my heartily dear little son. I see gladly that thou learnest well and prayest earnestly. Do thus, my little son, and go on. When I come home I will bring thee a fairing. (A present from the Fair.)

I know a pleasant garden wherein many children walk about. They have little golden coats, and pick up beautiful apples under the trees, and pears, cherries, and plums. They dance and are merry, and have also beautiful little ponies, with golden reins and silver

saddles. Then I asked the man whose the garden is, whose children those were; he said, "These are the children who love to pray, who learn their lessons, and are good." Then I said, "Dear man, I also have a little son; he is called Hansichen Luther. Might not he also come into the garden, that he might eat such apples and pears, and ride on such beautiful little ponies, and play with these children?" Then the man said, "If he loves to pray, learns his lessons, and is good, he also shall come into the garden; Lippus and Jost also (sons of Melanchthon, friend of Luther); and when they all come together they also shall have pipes, drums, lutes, and all kinds of music; and shall dance, and shoot with little bows and arrows."

And he showed me there a fair meadow in the garden prepared for dancing. There were many pipes of pure gold, drums, and silver bows and arrows. But it was still early in the day, so that the children had not had their breakfast. Therefore I could not wait for the dancing, and said to the man, "Ah, dear sir, I will go away at once and write all this to my little son Hansichen, that he may be sure to pray and learn well and be good, so that he also may come into the garden. But he has a dear Aunt Lena; he must bring her with him." "Then," said the man, "let it be so; go and write him thus."

Therefore, my dear little son Hansichen, learn thy lessons, and pray with a cheerful heart; and tell this to Lippus and Justus, too, that they also may learn their lessons and pray. So shall you all come together into this garden. Herewith I commend you to Almighty God; and greet Aunt Lena, and give her a kiss for me.

Thy dear father,

Martin Luther.

19

POPE LEO X. TO DUKE GEORGE OF SAXONY

WHEN *Pope Leo X heard that Martin Luther had rebelled against certain practices of the Catholic church, he "flew up in arms" and wrote the most powerful princes and churchmen in Germany to extirpate the "only son of Satan." In one of these letters he calls Luther an "infected scrofulous sheep" which must not be allowed to "grow strong in the healthy sheepfold of the Lord." The following letter reveals the indignation of the Pope, and at the same time marks the beginning of one of the greatest movements in history, the Reformation:*

"Martin Luther, Son of Perdition"

October 24, 1518

BELOVED Son, salutation and the Apostolic blessing! Not without pain we have learned from many letters and from rumor what has been done among

the faithful people of your part of Germany, which was always considered a Catholic province, and one most devoted and obedient to the Apostolic See. We have heard that Martin Luther, a son of perdition, at the suggestion of that cruel enemy of our salvation, the devil, has not blushed to say evil of us and of the said See, in preaching, or rather in cursing. Now this not only savors of heresy, but is worthy of severe punishment, and should not longer be borne by your devotion and obedience to us.

Desiring to extirpate this tare and cockle from the fertile field of the Lord, by your aid, fearing lest, should we wink at it, it would put forth deeper roots among the credulous people, we have charged Charles Von Miltitz, our notary, secret chamberlain and nuncio in the Lord, and a cleric of the church mission, to do so. For the wickedness of the thing demands it, and we hope it can be rightly and sufficiently done. We have enjoined the said Charles to expound to you our paternal love, hoping that he can rely on the help of your highness; and we charge you for the sake of all the faithful and of the Catholic church, and the unity and dignity of our See, that, considering the gravity of the present scandal, and the rank and damnable error and boldness of the said Martin, you should

favor the said Charles and help him to execute his mission. You will thus please God, whose cause you defend, and will also win praise from us and the said See.

20

A LETTER DESCRIBING A PLAGUE

THE *world has had many periods of woe, but perhaps none comparable to the suffering visited upon Europe and Asia by the Black Death, a plague which carried off from one-fourth to one-half of the population in many cities and countries during the fourteenth century. In some places so many died there were not enough left to bury the dead. In describing a plague at Florence, Petrarch wrote to a friend: "O happy posterity, who will not experience such dismal woe and will look upon our testimony as a fable!" Plagues of this nature visited Europe at intervals during the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries. At Danzig so many died that often from thirty to fifty were buried in one grave, piled one upon another. The following remarkable letter, describing the plague in Italy, was written by John Baptista Spinell to an unknown friend.*

"The People Are Perishing"

Naples, July 10, 1656

THE town is now only recognizable by its edifices and magnificent houses and no longer by its teeming population, the decrease and destruction of which is constantly augmented by the piled-up corpses.... The air is always so thick and misty, and is further obscured by multitudes of birds enticed by the carrion of the corpses, the stench of which is overwhelming. The dead are no longer counted. Misery and grief are great and general. Nearly all who are infected die, no one escapes. And those who survive the plague are killed by famine. To avoid the latter many a nobleman is seen going about without a cloak with a bundle of wood on his back, bearing home bread, vegetables, wine and other provisions, as there is a shortage of servants, all of whom are dead; and it is necessary to procure food with the sweat of one's brow and weigh it with diamond scales, although it is of a nature that even the sight of it causes horror, to say nothing of eating it.

The most beautiful girls have now abandoned all pretensions to magnificent clothes, but are seen scurry-

ing through the streets like shadows in search of food they are unable to find. Could they but only procure a little oil that they can have a light at night, so as not to have to die in the dark, like so many in the houses without the assistance of friends or servants, who die of starvation or are carried off by the plague and thus buried alive in their houses! Gold and silver no longer possess the power to purchase bread.

In the house next to ours a nobleman died last Sunday who had lost all his servants by the disease. His wife and a cousin were still alive, but in the course of two days they died, too, as they had nothing to eat or drink — they simply fell back on their beds and were found dead in their beds.

In our neighborhood used to live more than a thousand nobles and rich people, of whom but five remain — a woman, three children and a priest, but all are infected, and our house stands in the midst of them. In spite of this, by the grace of God, we are all still healthy, and as if by a miracle of God and by His grace, are still alive.

In consequence of the scourge more than ten thousand people in this city are said to be dead, and, in spite of this, many continue to die, and it seems as if the Almighty had decreed our complete destruction.

I have written a great deal, but have hardly suc-

ceeded in giving an idea of the misery. All kinds of people are to be seen here, who have lost their senses, running about in their shirts or even completely naked. In their distress they often fall down in the streets and die.

All that is heard is woeful weeping, fit to cause the deepest pity. The people are perishing, and there is such an abominable stench that it alone would suffice to kill, so that everyone longs for death, to be delivered from this fearful misery. Many die in despair, believing that hell can be no worse. Multitudes of dogs and cats scamper through the streets, appeasing their hunger on the corpses lying about everywhere. The churches, shops and houses are all closed. There are neither doctors, physicians, apothecaries, nor priests to be had; thus all must die without medical attention or sacrament. Those who are fortunate are dragged with a rope round their necks to a field and burnt. The others remain lying in the streets and alleys, and are gnawed by dogs and cats. Thus we are suffering greater persecution and humiliation than the Jews under Titus Vespasianus, because we have deserved it more than they by our great sins. May God preserve the Master his mercy, and I submit my soul to the Almighty God.

Thy devoted, John Baptista Spinell.

21

ANNE BOLEYN TO HENRY VIII.

"My *favorite character in English history," a school boy once wrote, "is Henry VIII. because he had eight wives and killed them all." The boy made him a Bluebeard. Henry was married only six times and killed only two of his wives, but he treated a few of the others rather cruelly. He divorced his dutiful Catherine of Aragon after twenty years of married life. She was greatly beloved by her subjects. Her last plea before the King is one of the most pathetic incidents in history. Henry's heart was set on a beautiful maid of honor, Anne Boleyn. She is said to have been even more charming than beautiful. She was a brunette, rather tall and slender, engaging in personality, with a ready wit and vivacious manner, and was proud of a very small and beautiful neck. After awhile the King grew tired of her and centred his affections upon Jane Seymour. Anne Boleyn had already become the mother of Elizabeth, the future great Queen of England. Henry charged his wife with disloyalty. He confined her to the Tower and sentenced her to death. Young, beautiful, intelligent, mother of a promising child who needed her counsel, Anne Boleyn in the Tower presents a pitiable figure, one of the sad vic-*

tims of the whims of fate. Her last plea to Henry was the following famous letter written to him from her "doleful prison":

"My Doleful Prison in the Tower"

SIR:

Your Grace's displeasure and my imprisonment are things so strange unto me, as what to write, or what to excuse, I am altogether ignorant. Whereas you send unto me (willing me to confess a truth, and so obtain your favour), by such an one whom you know to be mine ancient professed enemy.... But let not your Grace ever imagine that your poor wife will ever be brought to acknowledge a fault, where not so much as a thought thereof ever proceeded. And to speak a truth, never Prince had wife more loyal in all duty, and in all true affection, than you have ever found in Anne Boleyn. With such name and place I would willingly have contented myself, if God and your Grace's pleasure had so been pleased.

You have chosen me from a low estate to be your Queen and companion, far beyond my desert or desire. If then, you found me worthy of such honor, good your Grace, let not any light fancy, or bad coun-

sel of mine enemies, withdraw your princely favor from me; neither let that stain, that unworthy stain, of a disloyal heart toward your good Grace, even cast so foul a blot on your most dutiful wife and the infant Princess, your daughter. Try me, good King. But let me have a lawful trial, and let not my sworn enemies sit as my accusers and Judges. Yea, let me receive an open trial, for my truth shall fear no open shames.... So that whatsoever God or you may determine of me... mine offence being so lawfully proved, your Grace is at liberty, both before God and man, not only to execute worthy punishment on me as an unfaithful wife, but to follow your affections already settled on that party... whose name I could some good while since have pointed unto....

If ever the name of Anne Boleyn hath been pleasing in your eyes, then let me obtain this request. And I will so leave to trouble your Grace any further with mine earnest prayers to the Trinity to have your Grace in His good keeping, and to direct you in all your actions. From my doleful prison in the Tower, this sixth day of May.

Your most loyal and ever faithful wife,
Anne Boleyn.

Anne Boleyn lived, 1507 – 1536.

22

WALTER, EARL OF ESSEX, TO LORD BURLEIGH, LORD TREASURER

How *much should parents interfere in the marriage engagements of their children? History reveals that in many countries it has been a very important part of the parental duty to see that the son or daughter was well-married. Parents have looked upon elopements as something terrible. In the selection of mates, which is the wiser course, to follow instinct and love entirely, or the advice of older ones? The experience of mankind has not fully answered this question. Great mistakes have been made both ways. Perhaps they will continue to be made for a long time to come. That contracting marriage was a very business-like proposition among the noblemen of old England, is indicated by the following letter from the Earl of Essex to Lord Burleigh, proposing marriage between the former's son and the latter's daughter.*

"The Countess, Your Daughter"

MY very good Lord: Because I have ever found in your Lordship such love and favor toward me as I cannot in any way fully requite, I have therefore resolved to make you the offer of the most sufficient pledge of my good will, namely, the direction, education, and marriage of my eldest son, whom if you can like, to match with your daughter. I will presently assure him two thousand marks by year in England, beside my houses, domains and parks. I will give to your Lordship one hundred pounds or two hundred marks by year for his education. I will assure to your daughter five hundred pounds by year in jointure, and, upon their marriage, depart with a convenient portion for their maintenance during my life.

If at the years of discretion the match shall not go forward, I will give to the gentlewoman to her marriage two thousand pounds. I do this in behalf of my son. From myself you shall most assuredly look and ever find as firm and constant friendship as your Lordship shall receive by any other alliance in England. To all of which points I pledge my honor and faith, and have testified the like to the bearer to be

uttered to your Lordship as I do now also confirm it with my hand and seal.

There is equality sufficient in their years, no great distance in neighborhood between Tiboldes and Bonington. Such an occasion might make me like well of my lands in Essex, where, if God send me life, I might hereafter show all offices of friendship to the good countess, your daughter, of whose match I mistrust not but your Lordship shall in the end receive singular comfort. Your Lordship seeth how open and plain I am; use me as it shall please you. And so with my most hearty commendations to my lady I take my leave. At Knockfergus the first of November 1573.

At your Lordship's commandment,

W. Essex.

To *the Right Honorable my very good Lord, the Lord Burleigh, Lord Treasurer of England.*

23

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS TO HER LOVER, THE EARL OF BOTHWELL

Unhappy *Mary Queen of Scots! Beautiful, as a queen should be, brilliant, affable, defiant, fervent in love, she was the victim of an indecent court in youth, being trained by Catherine de Medici in France; a victim of two unhappy marriages which were forced upon her by circumstances, a third and the only marriage of love ending in the banishment of her husband and the loss of her throne; accused of the murder of her second husband; thrown into the hands of her English enemies, once befriended by her cousin, Queen Elizabeth, who later signed Mary's death warrant, though reluctantly; going to her death praying for her enemies and Queen Elizabeth, asking her executioners to admit some of her subjects so that they might see how bravely a queen could die; misrepresented, the victim of ambitious plots and her own passions, welcoming death to put an end to her troubles — this queen presents a life which those who read with an unbiased mind, find much to censure, more to love, and still more to pity — truly a tragic life, a life which found itself unable to withstand the cruel flings of an indifferent world. The following is one of the love letters for which she has become famous:*

"This Burden of a Crown"

YOU complain of me, my dear Bothwell, without cause; did you know what insurmountable difficulties attend a person of my station in the pursuit of an affair such as ours, you would not blame me, but pity me. All my moments are taken up with consultations; the distractions of the times overwhelm me — I ought to exchange this soft and gentle nature of mine for one all rough and masculine, to be able to cope with the oppositions I daily meet with. Besides, the Lord Darnley is perpetually with me, pretends to testify his passion by his jealousy, and backed by that assuming arbitress of my fate, the English Queen, already takes upon him the authority of an husband. What can I do, torn and divided between different factions, both equally pernicious to their sovereign's interest? Yet in spite of the contending storms, in spite of business cares, and all my vast fatigues, STILL DOES MY HEART FIND ROOM FOR LOVE. Yes, I protest, my dear Bothwell, that for an humble life with you I gladly would exchange this load of greatness and throw it to those who seem ambitious for it, this gaudy burden of a

crown. But even that is a privilege denied me. I must either continue to reign or cease to live. My power is all that can protect my Bothwell. Should I relinquish that, or want the means of preserving you, it is not the pretended friendship of the ever changing Murray would afford you any shelter. Do not, therefore, impute it to the want of impatience to see you, that I shall delay your coming to Edinburgh; 'tis for the future repose of us both that I command you to tarry yet longer where you are; but methinks I need not any arguments to convince you that it is wholly your interest I study. Too precious have been the proofs I have given you of my tenderness for you to doubt the sincerity of it, nor do I believe you want sense or gratitude to acknowledge what I have done for you. Time, however, must be the touchstone of the hearts of both. Write to me as usual. Believe me, all the consolation your unhappy Queen enjoys is in hearing from you. Till fate allows us the blessing of a nearer conversation, which I hope and pray may be sooner than you expect, and as swift as my desires, a legion of angels attend and be your guard from all exterior harms and keep you ever faithful to

M. R.

P.S.— I had forgot to warn you of my Lord Herris; he designs you a visit. It can be for no other reason than to pry into your behavior — be cautious of yourself before him.

Farewell.

Mary Queen of Scots lived, 1542–1587.

24

QUEEN ELIZABETH TO MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS

THE *world will perhaps never know exactly how Queen Elizabeth felt about executing her cousin, the beautiful Mary Queen of Scots. It is known that Elizabeth, more than once, expressed sympathy for Mary because of the many troubles that had beset the ill-fated Queen from the day she left France, where she was brought up, until she was banished from the throne of Scotland. At one time Elizabeth was about to intercede in behalf of Mary, when the great Cecil advised her that, in siding with Mary, she would be offending a faction in Scotland, whose friendship at that time, was necessary to be kept intact for the benefit of England.*

Elizabeth was driven, step by step, by political circumstances, to imprison Mary. Although accused of being jealous of Mary's beauty and power, to which there may be some truth, at the same time, Elizabeth's position as Queen, surrounded by factions also, naturally made her sympathize with her cousin. Mary was accused of conspiring against Elizabeth's life, was tried and sentenced to death. Elizabeth was reluctant to sign the death warrant, and after she had done so, expressed regret that one of Mary's

keepers had not found a way to shorten the latter's life, thereby relieving her of a great responsibility. Mary was of a defiant disposition. The following letter gives us an insight into the relations between the two, which ended in the tragedy the world will never forget:

"Your Cousin That Wisheth You a Better Mind"

February 1, 1571.

MADAM: Of late I have received divers letters from you, which you may well guess, by the accidents of the time, why I have not answered, but specially because I saw no matter in them that required any such answer as could have contented you, and to have discontented you would have been an increase of your impatience, which I thought time would have mitigated, as it commonly does where the cause thereof is not truly grounded, as it is in this case. But now finding by your last letter of the 27th, an increase of your impatience, tending also to many uncomely, passionate and vindictive speeches, I thought to change my former opinion, and by patient and advised words to move you to stay, or else to qualify your passions, and consider that it is not the manner to obtain good

things with evil speeches, nor benefits with injurious challenges, nor to get good to yourself by doing evil to another.

And yet, to avoid the fault which I note you have committed in filling a long letter with a multitude of sharp and injurious words, I will not by way of letter write any more of the matter, but have rather chosen to commit to my cousin, the Earl of Shrewsbury, the things which I have thought meet, upon the reading of your letters, to impart unto you. Wherewith, I think if reason may be present with you, and passion absent, at the reading, you will follow hereafter the course of the last part of your letter than the first; the latter being written as in a calm and the former in a storm. Wishing to you the same grace of God that I wish to myself, and that He may direct you to desire and attain to that which is meet for His honor and your quietness, with contention both of body and mind. Given at my Palace of Westminster the first day of February 1571.

Your cousin that wisheth
you a better mind.

25

SIR WALTER RALEIGH TO HIS WIFE

If you were sentenced to die, and you had an opportunity to write to your wife, whom you would never see again, what would you say? How would you dispose of your property? What advice would you give with regard to your children? Would you advise her to marry again? These and a number of other matters are touched upon in the letter which Sir Walter Raleigh wrote to his wife the night before he expected to be beheaded at Winchester, England. Raleigh had been accused of conspiracy, was tried and condemned to death. The following letter was written in 1603:

"Time and Death Call Me Away"

YOU shall now receive (my dear wife) my last words in these, my last lines. My love I send you, that you may keep it when I am dead, and my counsel, that you may remember it when I am no more. I would not by my will present you with sorrows, dear

Bess, let them go to the grave and be buried with me in the dust; and seeing it is not the will of God that ever I shall see you more in this life, bear it patiently and with a heart like thyself. First, I send you all the thanks my heart can conceive, or my words can express, for your many travails and cares taken for me. ... Secondly, I beseech you, for the love you bear me living, do not hide yourself many days; but by your travail, seek to help your miserable fortune and the right of your poor child; thy mourning cannot avail me, I am but dust. Thirdly, you shall understand that my land was conveyed (bona fide) to my child... and I trust my blood will quench their malice that have thus cruelly murdered me....

To what friend to direct thee I know not, for all mine have left me in the true time of trial; I plainly perceive that my death was determined from the first day. Most sorry I am, (as God knows) that, being thus surprised by death, I can leave you no better estate... but God hath prevented all my resolutions, even that great God that worketh all in all; but if you live free from want, care for no more, for the rest is but vanity; love God, and betimes to repose your trust on him; therein shall you find true and lasting riches, and endless comfort. For the rest, when you have travailed and wearied your thoughts, over all

sorts of worldly cogitation, you shall but sit down by sorrow in the end. Teach your son also to serve and fear God whilst he is yet young, that the fear of God may grow up with him; and then will God be a husband unto you, and a father unto him — a husband and a father which can never be taken from you....

When I am gone, no doubt, you shall be sought for by many, for the world thinks that I was very rich; but take heed of the pretences of men and their affections, for they last not but in honest and worthy men; and no greater misery can befall you in this life than to become a prey, and afterwards to be despised. I speak not this (God knows) to dissuade you from marriage, for it will be best for you, both in respect of the world and of God. As for me, I am no more yours, nor you mine, death hath cut us asunder; and God hath divided me from the world, and you from me....

Beg my dead body, which living, was denied thee, and either lay it at Sherborn (if the land continue), or in Exeter church, by my father and mother; I can say no more; time and death call me away.

The everlasting God, infinite, powerful, and inscrutable; that Almighty God which is goodness itself, mercy itself, the true life and light, keep thee and thine, have mercy on me, and teach me to forgive my perse-

cutors and false accusers, and send us to meet again in his glorious kingdom! My true wife, farewell! Bless my poor boy; pray for me, and let my good God hold you both in his arms.

Written with the dying hand of sometime thy husband, but now, alas, overthrown.

Yours that was, but now not my own,

Walter Raleigh.

Raleigh's *execution did not come the next day. He remained in prison for twelve years, was pardoned to make a sea voyage, but failing in this enterprise, he was again imprisoned, and was executed in October, 1618.*

26

SIR FRANCIS BACON TO KING JAMES I.

"The smartest and meanest of mankind," Macaulay said of Bacon; a rather unfair estimate of the man, yet it was characteristic of Macaulay to use contrast to an exaggerated degree. Born of noble parentage, Bacon was thwarted in his youthful ambitions by his uncle, Lord Burleigh, one of Elizabeth's ministers. But he studied law, entered Parliament, where he became famed for his pithy speeches, rose to the highest legal position in England, was a writer of immortal essays, is the father of the present age of scientific experiment and progress, because he taught men to think, in his scientific writings; yet in spite of all this learning, in spite of his powerful intellect, he accepted bribes as a judge, was tried, found guilty, fined forty thousand pounds, and sentenced to be imprisoned in the Tower during the King's pleasure. The King released him, remitted the fine, and gave him an annual pension of twelve hundred pounds. The following letter to the King after his disgrace shows his misery, and gives in his own words an account of how far in the world he had gone, and how low he had fallen, a unique document in all literature:

"Help Me, Dear Sovereign, and Pity Me"

MAY it please your most excellent Majesty:

In the midst of my misery, which is rather assuaged by remembrance than by hope, my chiefest worldly comfort is to think ... that I was evermore so happy as to have my poor services graciously accepted by your majesty.... For as I have often said to your majesty, I was towards you but as a bucket and a cistern, to draw forth and conserve, yourself was the fountain. Unto this comfort of nineteen years' prosperity, there succeeded a comfort even in my greatest adversity, somewhat of the same nature; which is, that in those offences wherewith I was charged, there was not anyone that had special relation to your majesty. ...I have an assured belief that there is in your majesty's own princely thoughts, a great deal of serenity and clearness to me, your majesty's now prostrate and cast-down servants....

And, indeed, if it may please your majesty, this theme of my misery is so plentiful that it need not be coupled with anything else. I have been somebody by your majesty's singular and undeserved favor, even

the prime officer of your kingdom. Your majesty's arm hath been over mine in council, when you presided at the table; so near was I! I have borne your majesty's image in metal, much more in heart. I was never, in nineteen years' service, chided by your majesty.... But why should I speak of these things which are now vanished? but only the better to express my downfall. For now it is thus with me: I am a year and a half old in misery; though I must ever acknowledge your majesty's grace and mercy. For I do not think it possible that any whom you once loved should be totally miserable. Mine own means, through mine own improvidence, are poor and weak, little better than my father left me....

I have, most gracious sovereign, faith enough for a miracle, and much more for a grace, that your majesty will not suffer your poor creature to be utterly defaced, nor blot the name quite out of your book, upon which your sacred hand hath been so oft for new ornaments and additions.

Unto this degree of compassion, I hope God above, (of whose mercy towards me, both in my prosperity and adversity, I have had great testimonies and pledges, though mine own manifold and wretched unthankfulness might have averted them,) will dispose your princely heart already prepared for all piety.... I most

humbly beseech your majesty to give me leave to conclude with those words which necessity speaketh: Help me, dear sovereign, lord and master, and pity me. So far as I that have borne a bag, be not now in any age forced in effect to bear a wallet; nor that I, that desire to live to study, may not be driven to study to live.... God of heaven ever bless, preserve, and prosper your majesty. Your majesty's poor ancient servant and beadsman.

Francis St. Albans.

Bacon lived, 1561 – 1626.

In *another letter to the king, Bacon spoke of his life as "this little end of my thread which remaineth ... I have been the keeper of your seal, and now am your beadsman."*

Thus was given to the world another one of "life's little ironies"

27

OLIVER CROMWELL TO COLONEL HACKER

Oliver Cromwell won the great battle of Marston Moor with an army of farmers who went into the fight singing the Old Testament Psalms. His troop was known as "Ironsides." He felt that religious enthusiasm was a great factor in winning battles. His men were free from the usual license of the camp. They were truly Godly men. In selecting these men for soldiers there was a bit of strategy, as well as sincerity, on Cromwell's part. It is well known to students of history that he was uniformly successful in this war against the tyrannical Charles I., the latter losing his throne and his head as a result of the war, and Cromwell becoming Lord Protector of England. The following letter to one of his subordinates is significant because it gives Cromwell's idea of what he wanted his army to be:

"He That Prays and Preaches Best Will Fight Best"

December 25, 1650

SIR: I have the best consideration for the present in this business, and although I believe Captain Hub-

bert is a worthy man, and hear so much, yet as the cause stands, I cannot with satisfaction to myself and some others, revoke the commission I had given to Captain Empson, without offense to them and reflection upon my own judgment. I pray let Captain Hubbert know I shall not be unmindful of him, and that no disrespect is intended to him. But indeed I was not satisfied with your last speech to me about Empson, that he was a better preacher than a fighter or soldier, or words to that effect. Truly I think he that prays and preaches best will fight best. I know nothing will give like courage and confidence as the knowledge of God in Christ will, and I bless God to see any in this army able and willing to impart the knowledge they have for the good of others. And I expect it to be encouraged by all chief officers in this army especially: and I hope you will do so. I pray receive Captain Empson lovingly. I dare assure you he is a good man and a good officer. I would we had no worse.

I rest

Your loving friend,

O. Cromwell.

To Colonel Francis Hacker
at Pebles.

Two *other great generals of history who claimed that prayer played a great part in the success of their armies, were "Stonewall" Jackson, and the late Marshal Foch, of France. "Strangle the fool that dares to scoff," said Jackson as he and his men kneeled for prayer before a battle. Marshal Foch spent hours in meditation and prayer.*

28

DAVID HUME TO AN UNKNOWN FRIEND CONCERNING ROUSSEAU

"Man is born free and yet is now everywhere in chains." These eleven words, written by the great French writer, Rousseau, in the eighteenth century, have played an inestimable part in revolutionizing the governments of mankind. This clarion call to men the world over to rise and shake off their ancient bondage was answered in the American and French Revolutions. Rousseau was also influential in education. In his book, "Emile," he says that men are overcivilized. He wanted them to return to nature. "All things are good as their Author made them," he writes, "but everything degenerates in the hands of man.... Civilized man is born, lives, dies in a state of slavery. At his birth he is sewed in swaddling clothes; at his death he is nailed in a coffin." But this unusual man, this inspiring apostle of human freedom, in addition to the troubles heaped upon him by his countrymen, was subject to the eccentricities of genius, and fell into strange imaginings. A contemporary of his was the English philosopher, David Hume. It was inevitable that these two unusual minds should come into contact. The following letter on an incident in the life of Rousseau shows to what extremity genius will sometimes go:

"The Poor Man Is Mad"

I DO not know whether you have heard of the late events which have happened to the poor unfortunate Rousseau, who has become extremely extravagant, and who is an object of the greatest compassion. It is about three weeks since he set off, without giving the least nature of it, from M. Davenport's house, carrying with him only his gouvernante (female attendant), and leaving behind the greatest part of his effects, and about thirty guineas in money. There was also found on his table a letter full of reproaches against his host, whom he accused of having been an accomplice in a plot of mine to ruin and dishonour him. He took the road to London; and M. Davenport begged of me to search for him, and to learn how his baggage and money should be sent to him. Nothing was heard of him for a fortnight; when, at length, the Chancellor received from him a most extravagant letter, dated from Spalding in Lincolnshire. He tells this magistrate that he is on his way to Dover with the design of quitting the kingdom (observe that Spalding is quite out of the road); but that he dare not proceed one step

farther, nor even go out of doors, from the fear of his enemies. He then conjures the Chancellor to send him a guide authorized to conduct him, and he requests this as the last act of hospitality of this nation toward him. A few days after, I learned from M. Davenport, that he had received a fresh letter from Rousseau dated also from Spalding, in which he testified the most lively repentance. He speaks of his sad and unfortunate situation.... At the end of a few hours General Conway received a letter from him, dated at Dover, about two hundred miles distant from Spalding.... Nothing can be more obscure than this letter. He supposes that he is a state prisoner in the hands of General Conway, and that in consequence of my suggestions.... He represents the danger which he runs of being assassinated....

I inform you of all these details that you may see that the poor man is absolutely mad, and consequently that he is not in a situation to be pursued by law, nor an object of civil punishment. He has certainly passed over to Calais; and being now within the jurisdiction of the Parliament of Paris, he will probably be arrested and perhaps treated without any regard to his unhappy situation....

It, therefore, seemed to me important that some persons of weight and merit should know the real state

of things, at first hand; in order that the enemies of this unhappy man, seeing their revenge fully gratified by his past misfortunes, may no longer add to the burden of afflictions too severe for any human being to endure.... If he can be settled in a secure and tranquil retreat, under the protection of some prudent person, he has the means of supplying all his wants. He has, if I am not mistaken, about 100 louis a year of his own. The King of England has granted him an equal sum....

David Hume.

Hume died in 1776 and Rousseau two years later.

29

VOLTAIRE TO FREDERICK WILLIAM, PRINCE OF PRUSSIA

It is not easy to judge the religion of a man who criticizes the Church. Voltaire attacked the Church mercilessly. He believed that it was responsible for most of the evils of his day. He was blind to the good that it had done. As a result, his attitude toward religion has many times been misunderstood. There is a work entitled: "Voltaire in Hades." The truth is, Voltaire was a firm believer in God. At his country home on Lake Geneva he erected a temple which he dedicated to the God of Nature. He defended the existence of the soul, and pronounced Baron d' Holbach's book, "The System of Nature" (on the necessity of Atheism) as a "sin against nature." Truly he was a breaker of images, but he wrote in defense of human freedom, especially the free exercise of reason. Lowell said that we owe half of our liberties to that "leering old mocker." He wrote dramas, histories, philosophic works, romances, epics and innumerable letters. The following letter is of interest because of Voltaire's defense of God and the soul.

'If There Were No God It Would Be Necessary to Invent One"

MONSEIGNEUR, the royal family of Prussia has excellent reasons for not wishing the annihilation of the soul. It has more right than anyone to immortality.

It is very true that we do not know any too well what the soul is: no one has ever seen it. All that we do know is that the eternal Lord of Nature has given us the power of thinking, and of distinguishing virtues. It is not proved that this faculty survives our death; but the contrary is not proved either. It is possible, doubtless, that God has given thought to a particle, which, after we are no more, He will still give the power of thought; there is no inconsistency in this idea.

In the midst of all the doubts which we have discussed for four thousand years in four thousand ways, the safest course is to do nothing against one's conscience. With this secret, we can enjoy life and can have nothing to fear from death.

There are some charlatans who admit no doubts. We know nothing of first principles. It is surely very

presumptuous to define God, the angels, spirits, and to pretend to know precisely why God made the world, when we do not know why we can move our arms at our pleasure.

Doubt is not a pleasant condition, but certainty is an absurd one.

What is most repellent in The System of Nature — after the recipe to make eels from flour — is the audacity with which it decides that there is no God, without even having tried to prove the impossibility. There is some eloquence in the book: but much more rant and no sort of proof. It is a pernicious work, alike for princes and people.

"If there were no God it would be necessary to invent one." (Used by Voltaire in another work; he was fond of quoting it.)

But all nature cries aloud that He does exist: that there is a supreme intelligence, an immense power, an admirable order, and everything teaches our own dependence on it.

From the depth of our profound ignorance, let us do our best; this is what I think, and what I have always thought, amid all the miseries and follies inseparable from seventy-seven years of life.

Your Royal Highness has a noble career before you. I wish you, and dare prophecy for you, a happi-

ness worthy of yourself and of your heart. I knew you when you were a child, Monseigneur: I visited you in your sick room when you had smallpox; I feared for your life. Your father honored me with much goodness: you condescend to shower on me the same favors which are the honor of my old age, and the consolation of those sufferings which must shortly end it. I am, with deep respect.

Voltaire.

30

VOLTAIRE TO FREDERICK THE GREAT

"If *your works deserve statues, your conduct deserves chains," wrote Frederick the Great to Voltaire. Voltaire replied: "I demand justice and death." This came at the end of a friendship between the two that had attracted the attention of the civilized world. Voltaire had been invited to live with Frederick at the latter's court. For a while they got along well together, but their eccentricities, the differences in their personalities, inevitably led to trouble. They quarreled and parted. The break came about in a rather unusual way. Frederick had given Voltaire permission to have published in the royal printing office a Defense of Lord Bolingbroke. Voltaire was accused of slipping in an additional work, "The Diatribe of Dr. Akakia." The latter was a merciless onslaught on Maupertuis, the President of the Royal Academy of Berlin, and Frederick's very close friend. There was some controversy as to whether Voltaire or the printer was responsible for the insertion of Akakia. "Your effrontery amazes me," said Frederick. "Do not imagine you can make people believe black is white." On New Year's Day, 1753, Voltaire returned to Frederick the*

cross and ribbon of the Prussian honor which had been conferred upon him, and wrote the following farewell:

"I Made You My Idol"

SIRE, urged by the prayers and tears of my family, I am compelled to lay my fate at your feet, together with the favours and marks of distinction with which you have honored me. Attached to you for sixteen years by many kindnesses; summoned to your side in my old age; my fears of that transplantation, which has cost me much, quieted by the most solemn promises; and having had the honor of living two and a half years at your side; it is impossible you should deny to me the possession of feelings which have outweighed in my heart the claims of my country, my king (who is at once my sovereign and benefactor), my family, my friends, and my occupations:

I have lost them all. Nothing remains to me but the remembrance of the pleasant days I have spent in your retreat at Potsdam. After that, all other solitudes will indeed seem melancholy to me. It is, moreover, hard to leave at this season of the year, especially when one is, as I am, the victim of many diseases; and it is

harder still to leave you. Believe me, that is the only pain I am capable of feeling at this moment. The French envoy, who has come in as I write this, will bear witness to my sorrow, and will answer for me to your Majesty of the sentiments I shall always retain. I made you my idol: an honest man does not change his religion, and sixteen years of a limitless devotion cannot be destroyed by a single unfortunate moment.

I flatter myself that out of so much kindness you will keep at least some feeling of humanity toward me; that is my sole consolation, if consolation I may have.

Voltaire.

In spite of the differences which had arisen between the two, and after Voltaire had written the above letter, Frederick would not let Voltaire leave Germany. Three months later, March 1st, Voltaire wrote Frederick pleading for permission to go to Plombieres and drink the waters there for his health. The following famous dismissal was written by Frederick, March 16, 1753:

He can leave my service when he feels inclined: he need not trouble to invent the excuse of the waters of Plombieres, but he must have the goodness before

he goes, to return to me the contract of the engagement, the key, the cross and the volume of poetry which I have confided to him. I could wish that he and Koenig had only attacked my works, which I sacrifice willingly to those who desire to belittle other people's reputations. I have none of the vanity and folly of authors, and the cabals of men of letters seem to me the depth of baseness.

Frederick.

31

THE EARL OF CHESTERFIELD TO HIS SON, PHILIP STANHOPE

The Earl of Chesterfield, who married the daughter of a king, rose to be Lord Protector of Ireland and became Secretary of State, is remembered best for what he wanted to be remembered by least, or not at all, and that is, the letters to his son. And what he wanted to be remembered by, his acts and writings, have been forgotten. He became an ally of the great Pitt and an enemy of Robert Walpole. He was tremendously in earnest about the education of his son, and his letters are full of sincere advice. Much of this advice is of the best kind, while a great deal of it would not today, or even then, be suitable for any son, according to critics of the great Earl. It many times happens that what is not intended to be literature is the most interesting of all literature, because such writings very often are unaffected effusions of the heart and soul. The following is typical:

Concerning Women

September 5, 1748.

AS women are a considerable, or at least a pretty numerous, part of company, and as their suffrages go a great way toward establishing a man's character in the fashionable part of the world — which is of great importance to the fortune and figure he proposes to make in it — it is necessary to please them. I will therefore, upon this subject, let you into certain arcana, that will be very useful for you to know, but which you must with the utmost care conceal, and never seem to know. Women, then, are only children of a larger growth; they have an entertaining tattle and sometimes wit, but for solid, reasoning good sense, I never in my life knew one that had it, or acted consequentially for four-and-twenty hours together. Some little passion or humor breaks in upon their best resolutions.... A man of sense only trifles with them, plays with them, humors and flatters them, as he does with a sprightly, forward child; but he neither consults them about, nor trusts them with, serious matters, though he often makes them believe that he does both — which is the thing

in the world that they are proud of; for they love mightily to be dabbling in business — which, by the way, they always spoil — and, being justly distrustful that men in general look upon them in a trifling light, they almost adore that man who talks more seriously to them, and who seems to consult them — I say, who seems, for weak men really do, but wise ones only seem to do it. No flattery is either too high or too low for them. They will greedily swallow the highest, and gratefully accept the lowest; and you may safely flatter any woman, from her understanding down to the exquisite taste of her fan.... Every woman who is not absolutely ugly thinks herself handsome, but, not hearing often that she is so, is the more grateful and the more obliged to the few who tell her so; whereas a decided and conscious beauty looks upon every tribute paid to her beauty only as her due, but wants to shine and to be considered on the side of her understanding; and a woman who is ugly enough to know she is so, knows that she has nothing left but her understanding, which is consequently — and probably in more senses than one — her weak side.

But these are secrets that you must keep inviolably, if you would not, like Orpheus, be torn to pieces by the whole sex. On the contrary, a man who thinks of living in the great world must be gallant, polite, and

attentive to please the women. They have, from the weakness of men, more or less influence in all courts; they absolutely stamp every man's character in the beau monde, and make it either current, or cry it down and stop it in payments. It is, therefore, absolutely necessary to manage, please, and flatter them, and never to discover the least marks of contempt, which is what they never forgive....

32

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON TO CHESTERFIELD

A GREAT *English philosopher at a dinner table would, "in a fit of absence, stoop down and twitch off a lady's shoe. He would amaze a drawing room by suddenly ejaculating a clause of the Lord's prayer." That man was Dr. Samuel Johnson, literary dictator and conversationalist. He was a great man who fought a lifelong struggle against his own peculiarities. It was because of these eccentricities that his wealthy friend and literary patron, the Earl of Chesterfield, finally refused to admit him to his home. Years later Dr. Johnson was preparing a great dictionary. The public was eager to see it. Johnson was now famous. Chesterfield, who as a patron, should have assisted Johnson during his early literary struggles, seeing the latter's growing popularity, wanted to renew the friendship. It is a pitiable figure, this eccentric young Johnson struggling, with so little hope, against his own weaknesses, poverty and disease. It is no wonder that when success came to him he looked back upon his past and his relations with Chesterfield with mixed emotions of pride and bitterness. Hearing of Chesterfield's*

desire to renew the friendship, Johnson wrote him the caustic letter which follows:

"Now That I Am Great"

February 7, 1775

MY Lord:

I have been lately informed by the proprietor of The World that two papers, in which my Dictionary is recommended to the public, were written by your Lordship. To be so distinguished is an honor which, being very little accustomed to favors from the great, I know not well how to receive, or in what way to acknowledge.

When, upon some slight encouragement, I first visited your Lordship, I was overpowered, like the rest of mankind, by the enchantment of your address, and could not forbear to wish that I might boast myself the conqueror of the conqueror of the earth: — that I might obtain that regard for which I saw the world contending. But I found my attendance so little encouraged that neither pride nor modesty would suffer me to continue it. When I had once addressed your Lordship in public, I had exhausted all the art of pleasing which a retired and uncourtly scholar can

possess. I had done all that I could; and no man is well pleased to have his all neglected, be it ever so little.

Seven years, my Lord, have now passed since I waited in your outward rooms, or was repulsed from your door; during which time I have been pushing on my work through difficulties, of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it, at last, to the verge of publication, without one act of assistance, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favor. Such treatment I did not expect, for I never had a patron before....

The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labors, had it been early, had been kind; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it; till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received, or to be unwilling that the public should consider me as owing that to a patron, which Providence has enabled me to do for myself....

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most humble,

Most obedient servant,

Sam. Johnson.

33

GEORGE WASHINGTON TO THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS

"FIGHTING *will be far preferable to starving," wrote General Huntington to General Washington, when the latter ordered him to be in readiness to march against the enemy. This was during the terrible winter at Valley Forge. Washington's generals were complaining because of a lack of provisions. In vain the great commander had urged the Continental Congress to send food and clothing. He was forced to do what all honest generals dislike very much to do — forage the surrounding country and seize supplies wherever he could find them. Although he had been given this authority by Congress, he "had a strong sympathy with the cultivators of the soil and ever regarded the yeomanry with a paternal eye." He was accused, by his enemies, of being wilfully inactive, when in reality he could not fight because he had nothing with which to fight. His army was small, and what men he had were either freezing to death or starving. A dangerous mutiny had occurred among General Varnum's men which had been very difficult to put down. There were provisions aplenty lying at different places "on the roads and in the woods," perishing for want of ways to transport them. Such was the inefficiency of*

Congress and the commissariat. It was under these circumstances that Washington wrote the following famous letter:

"On a Cold, Bleak Hill Without Clothes or Blankets"

December 23, 1777

THOUGH I had been tender, heretofore, of giving any opinion, or lodging complaints, as the change in that department took place contrary to my judgment, and the consequences thereof were predicted; yet, finding that the inactivity of the army, whether for want of provisions, clothes, or other essentials, is charged to my account, not only by the common vulgar but by those in power, it is time to speak plain in exculpation of myself. With truth, then, I can declare that no man, in my opinion, ever had his measures more impeded than I have by every department of the army....

As a proof of the little benefit received from a clothier-general, and as a further proof of the inability of any army, under the circumstances of this, to perform the common duties of soldiers,... we have, by a

field return this day made, no less than two thousand eight hundred and ninety-eight men now in camp unfit for duty, because they are barefoot and otherwise naked.... Since the 4th instant, our numbers fit for duty, from the hardships and exposures they have undergone, particularly *on account of blankets, (numbers have been obliged, and still are, to sit up all night by fires instead of taking comfortable rest in a natural and common way*), have decreased near to two thousand men.

We find gentlemen, without knowing whether the army was really going into winter-quarters or not, ... reprobating the measure as much as if they thought the soldiers were made of stocks or stones, and equally insensible of frost and snow....

But what makes this matter still more extraordinary in my eye, is that these very gentlemen, who were well apprised of the nakedness of the troops from ocular demonstration ... should think a winter's campaign, and the covering of those states (New Jersey and Pennsylvania) from the invasion of an enemy, so easy and practicable a business. I can assure those gentlemen that *it is a much easier and less distressing thing to draw remonstrances in a comfortable room by a good fireside than to occupy a cold, bleak hill and sleep under frost and snow, without clothes or blankets.*

However, although they seem to have little feeling for the naked and distressed soldiers, I feel abundantly for them and from my soul I pity those miseries which it is neither in my power to relieve nor prevent.

It is for these reasons, therefore, that I have dwelt upon the subject; and it adds not a little to my other difficulties and distress to find that much more is expected from me than is possible to be performed, and that upon the ground of safety and policy I am obliged to conceal the true state of the army from public view, and thereby expose myself to detraction and calumny.

George Washington.

34

THOMAS PAINE TO GEORGE WASHINGTON

*"*Tyranny, *like hell, is not easily conquered," were a few of the ringing words which Thomas Paine, soldier of fortune, wrote during the American Revolution to stir the people to action against the British. Benjamin Franklin had persuaded him to come to America and edit the Pennsylvania Magazine. After the Revolution Paine went to France and became involved in the intrigues of the French Revolution. He was arrested and imprisoned. He disliked Washington very much because the latter did not get him released. He also had a natural dislike for Washington's conservative policies, Paine thinking the United States should have had a freer government. This stinging letter to Washington is unique of its kind in all history. It has become so famous that it is known as Thomas Paine's letter.*

"A Hypocrite in Public Life"

Paris, June 30, 1795

As censure is but awkwardly softened by apology, I shall offer you no apology for this letter. The eventful crisis to which your double politics have conducted the affairs of your country, requires an investigation uncramped by ceremony.

There was a time when the fame of America, moral and political, stood fair and high in the world. ... The Washington of politics had not then appeared. ... I declare myself opposed to several matters in the constitution, particularly to the manner in which, what is called the Executive, is formed.... I also declare myself opposed to almost the whole of your administration; for I know it to have been deceitful, if not even perfidious.... The fugitives have found protection in you.... The part I played in the American Revolution is well known; I shall not here repeat it. I know also that had it not been for the aid received from France in men, money and ships, that your cold and unmilitary conduct, as I shall show in the course of this letter, would in all probability have lost America; at

least she would not have been the independent nation she is now. You slept away your time in the field till the finances of the country were exhausted, and you have but little share in the glory of the final event.

Elevated to the Presidency you assumed the merit of everything to yourself, and the natural ingratitude of your constitution began to appear. You commenced your Presidential career by encouraging and swallowing the grossest adulation, and you traveled from one end of America to the other, to put yourself in the way of receiving it. You have as many addresses in your chest as James II.

But when we speak of military character, something more is to be understood than constancy; and something more ought to be understood than the Fabian system of doing nothing. — The nothing part can be done by anybody. Old Mrs. Thompson, the house-keeper of headquarters (who threatened to make the sun and wind shine through Rivington of New York) could have done as well as Mr. Washington. Deborah would have been as good as Barak. Mr. Washington had the nominal rank of commander-in-chief; but he was not so in fact.... He had no control over, or direction of, the army to the northward, under Gates, that captured Burgoyne, nor of that of the south, under Green, that recovered the

southern states. The nominal rank, however, of commander-in-chief, served to throw upon him the lustre of those actions, and to make him appear as the soul and centre of all the military operations in America....

And as to you, sir, treacherous to private friendship (for so you have been to me, and that in the day of danger) and a hypocrite in public life, the world will be puzzled to decide whether you are an apostate or an impostor, whether you have abandoned good principles, or whether you ever had any.

Thomas Paine.

35

MADAME SEVIGNE TO HER DAUGHTER, MADAME DE GRIGNAN

EVERY *honest trade has its noblemen. "Put thy heart into thy trowel," said an old Frenchman. Joy comes to the man who does his work well, be it ever so small. Men and women bury themselves in their trade and forget the cares of a troublous world. The butcher is just as proud of the finesse with which he cuts a steak, as the statesman is of an eloquent speech; the cook is just as proud of her cake, as the poet is of his verse. Pride in achievement is the mainspring of human progress. There is honor in every trade. A brick mason can rightly feel himself disgraced if his work is toppled by the first storm. Even the housewife has her pride. What hostess has not at some time been embarrassed by the insufficiency of her table? The meat would not go round, or the biscuits ran out. Men have died for the honor of their trade. The little story narrated in the following letter by Madame Sévigné, the celebrated Frenchwoman, whose beautiful letters have become known far beyond the realm of France, shows to what extremities men may go for the glory of their handiwork:*

"For the Honor of His Trade"

Paris, Sunday, April 26, 1671

THIS is Sunday, April 26th, and this letter will not go out till Wednesday; but it is not so much a letter as a narrative that I have just learned from Moreuil, of what passed at Chantilly with regard to poor Vatel. I wrote to you last Friday that he had stabbed himself — these are the particulars of the affair: The King arrived there on Thursday night; the walk, and the collation, which was served in a place set apart for the purpose, and strewed with jonquils, were just as they should be. Supper was served, but there was no roast meat at one or two of the tables, on account of Vatel's having been obliged to provide several dinners more than were expected. This affected his spirits, and he was heard to say, several times, "I have lost my honor! I cannot bear this disgrace!" "My head is quite bewildered," said he to Gourville. "I have not had a wink of sleep these twelve nights; I wish you would assist me in giving orders." Gourville did all he could to comfort and assist him; but the failure of the roast meat (which, however, did not happen at the King's

table, but at some of the other twenty-five), was always uppermost with him. Gourville mentioned it to the Prince, who went directly to Vatel's apartment, and said to him: "Everything is extremely well conducted, Vatel; nothing could be more admirable than his majesty's supper." "Your highness's goodness," replied he, "overwhelms me; I am sensible that there was a deficiency of roast meat at two tables." "Not at all," said the Prince; "do not perplex yourself, and all will go well." Midnight came; the fireworks did not succeed, they were covered with a thick cloud; they cost sixteen thousand franks. At four o'clock in the morning Vatel went round and found everybody asleep; he met one of the under-purveyors, who had just come in with only two loads of fish. "What!" said he, "is this all?" "Yes, sir," said the man, not knowing that Vatel had dispatched other people to all the seaports around. Vatel waited for some time; the other purveyors did not arrive; his head grew distracted; he thought there was no more fish to be had. He flew to Gourville: "Sir," said he, "I cannot outlive this disgrace." Gourville laughed at him. Vatel, however, went to his apartment, and setting the hilt of his sword against the door, after two ineffectual attempts, succeeded in the third, in forcing his sword through his heart. At that instant the carriers arrived with the fish; Vatel was

inquired after to distribute it. They ran to his apartment, knocked at the door, but received no answer, upon which they broke it open, and found him lying in a sea of blood. A messenger was immediately dispatched to acquaint the Prince with what had happened, who was like a man in despair. The Duke wept, for his Burgundy journey depended upon Vatel. The Prince related the whole affair to his majesty with great concern; it was considered as a consequence of too nice a sense of honor; some blamed, others praised him for his courage. The King said he had put off this excursion for more than five years because he was aware it would be attended with infinite trouble. He told the Prince that he ought to have had but two tables, and not have been at the expense of so many, and declared that he would never suffer him to do so again; but all this was too late for poor Vatel. However, Gourville attempted to supply the loss of Vatel which he did in great measure. The dinner was elegant, the collation the same. They supped, they walked, they hunted; all was perfumed with jonquils, all was enchantment....

36

FRANKLIN TO STRAHAN

A POOR *boy at sixteen, wealthy enough to retire at forty-two and devote the rest of his life to public service, printer, inventor, scientist, philosopher, statesman, Benjamin Franklin, Doctor Franklin, they called him in Europe, the first self-made American, set an example of success, human benefaction and patriotism that has never been surpassed in our history. His patriotism never received the glamour that surrounded Washington, because its expression lay along quieter channels, but through his negotiations in England and France he proved himself to be so valuable a factor that, without his labors, America might not have gained her freedom. The following cryptic letter to his old friend, Strahan, in England, has long been famous because of its patriotic fervor and unique ending. It is the shortest famous letter ever written by an American.*

"My Enemy"

July 5, 1775

MR. STRAHAN,—You are a member of Parliament, and one of that majority which has doomed my country to destruction. You have begun to burn our towns and murder our people. Look upon your hands; they are stained with the blood of your relations! You and I were long friends; you are now my enemy, and I am

Yours,

B. Franklin.

37

NAPOLEON TO JOSEPHINE

In the midst of Napoleon's brilliant military successes in Italy he was torn with the vicissitudes of love. The charming young widow, Josephine de Beauharnais, whom he had married not long before departing for his campaign, was anything but true to him while he was away. He was now only twenty-seven years of age. His letters to her while he was in Italy are among the most compassionate in any language. "No letters from you," he is continually complaining as he writes to her. "I write to you very often," he says, "and you write me very little." And when he does hear from her, he writes, "Your letters are as cold as fifty years." It was due to Josephine's influence with government officials that Napoleon received the command in Italy. She used her charm to advantage. When he left she spent her time at gay parties and in company with numerous paramours, all of which Napoleon heard about, yet he continued to love her. Thus this "adventurer and wrecker," as H. G. Wells calls him; "this dark little archaic personage, hard, compact, capable, unscrupulous, imitative and neatly vulgar," whom the artists have painted as living in hell tortured by the accusing cries of the thousands whom he murdered, was as great a lover as he was a conqueror, as

fervent in affection as he was brave on the battlefield. Of his ability to love, this burning letter is evidence:

"Ah! Josephine! Josephine!"

Milan, November 28, 1796

I HAVE received the express which Berthier had dispatched from Genoa. You had not time to write me. I feel it sensibly. Surrounded by gayety and amusements, you would have done wrong to have made the slightest sacrifice for me.

Berthier has much wished to show me the letter which you have written him. It is not my wish that you should alter any of your plans, or decline the parties of pleasure which are offered you. I am not worth the sacrifice; and the happiness or misery of a man you cannot love, ought not to concern you.

As for me, to love you alone, to make you happy, to do nothing which would contradict your wishes, this is my destiny and the aim of my life. Be happy, do not concern yourself about me; do not interest yourself in the happiness of a man who lives only in your life, who enjoys only your pleasures, your happiness. When I require from you love such as mine, I

do wrong; why should I wish that lace should weigh as much as gold? When I sacrifice to you all my desires, all my thoughts, all the moments of my life, I yield to the ascendency which your charms, your character, your whole being has gained over my wretched heart. I am wrong if nature has not given me attractions to fascinate you; but what I do deserve from Josephine is her esteem, her respect; for I love her alone, and most passionately.

Adieu, adorable wife, adieu my Josephine. Let fate concentrate in my heart all sorrows, and all griefs; but joy be given to my Josephine. Who merits it more than she? When it shall be proved that she can love no more, I will conceal my profound grief, and I will content myself with being useful and of some advantage to her.

I re-open my letter to give you one kiss. Ah! Josephine! Josephine!

Bonaparte.

38

THOMAS JEFFERSON TO JOHN ADAMS

"Jefferson still lives," said John Adams on his dying bed. He did not know that Jefferson was then dying also. This was July 4, 1826. What a fine day for two great friends, two immortal patriots, to die! A day which they had helped to make glorious! The friendship of these two famous Americans is perhaps the most splendid in our history. Long political enemies, they were philosophical enough to realize that intellectual differences should not mar personal friendship. Both saw the nation ushered in. Both became president, rival political leaders. Yet they were like playmates after a game. The contest had not marred their souls. It had, in fact, brought them closer together. It had shown them the worth of each. There is no party, no caste, no class, when two great men stand face to face. These two men led a nation in war, in peace. Moreover, they have given to our countrymen the splendid example of a friendship which even trickery cannot undermine. The sentiment expressed in the following letter from Jefferson to Adams, at a most embarrassing moment for both of them, when the least word might have broken the "sweet peace" of declining years, will live, we hope, long after the world shall have

reached that stage of civilization when the cheap bickering of party spirit is no more:

"Thorns on the Pillow of Age"

Monticello, October 12, 1823

DEAR sir,—I do not write with the ease which your letter of September 18th supposes. Crippled wrists and fingers make writing slow and laborious. Yet while writing to you, I lose the sense of these things in the recollection of ancient times, when youth and health made happiness out of everything. I forget for a while the hoary winters of age, when we can think of nothing but how to keep warm, and how to get rid of our heavy hours until the friendly hand of death shall rid us of all at once. Against this tedium vitæ (weary life), however, I am fortunately mounted on a hobby, which, indeed, I should have better managed some thirty or forty years ago.... This is the establishment of a university. (The University of Virginia.)...

Putting aside these things, however, for the present, I write this letter as due a friend coeval with our government, and now attempted to be poisoned when

too late in life to be replaced by new affections. I had for some time observed in the public papers, dark hints and mysterious innuendoes of a correspondence of yours with a friend, to whom you had opened your bosom without reserve, and which was to be made public by that friend or his representative. And now, it is said to be actually published. It has not yet reached us, but extracts have been given, and such as seemed most likely to draw a curtain of separation between you and myself, were there no other motive than that of indignation against the author of this outrage on private confidence, whose shaft seems to have been aimed at yourself more particularly, this would make it the duty of every honorable mind to disappoint that aim, by opposing to its impression a sevenfold shield of apathy and insensibility. With me, however, no such armor is needed. The circumstances of the times in which we have happened to live, and the particular period, placed us in a state of apparent opposition, which some might suppose to be personal also; and there might not be wanting those who wished to make it so, by filling our ears with malignant falsehoods.... And if there had been at any time, a moment when we were off our guard, and in a temper let the whispers of these people make us forget what we had known of each other for so many years, and years of so much trial,

yet all men . . . who have seen the false colors under which passion sometimes dresses the actions and motives of others, have seen also those passions subsiding with time and reflection, dissipating like mists before the rising sun, and restoring us the sight of all things in their true shape and colors. It would be strange indeed, if, at our years, we were to go back an age to hunt up imaginary or forgotten facts, to disturb the repose of affections so sweetening to the evening of our lives. Be assured, my dear sir, that I am incapable of receiving the slightest impression from the effort now made to plant thorns on the pillow of age, worth and wisdom, and to sow tares between friends who have been such for near half a century. Beseeching you, then, not to suffer your mind to be disquieted by this wicked attempt to poison its peace, and praying you to throw it by among the things which have never happened, I add sincere assurances of my unabated and constant attachment, friendship and respect.

Thomas Jefferson.

39

SIR WALTER SCOTT TO THE DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH

At Waterloo, the little Emperor who had boasted that Europe needed a Big Boss, took to his heels and left the field of honor in the hands of his old enemy, England, with the Duke of Wellington made immortal. As one star rose another fell. The days of glory of the great Corsican were over; the rest was retribution. Lucifer had fallen. Yesterday he was dispensing thrones to his brothers and generals. Within a few years he had risen from poverty and obscurity to be the most powerful man of his age, if not of all time. It had been a wonderful drama. The world stood aghast! It had admired his rise, had cursed his ambition, and now it was to laugh at him, scorn him, pity him. The lion was to be caged. St. Helena was to be his grave, Paris his sepulcher. He once had the whole of Europe almost within his grasp, but his last days were spent in a little, cramped, imprisoned place, hardly big enough in which to die. Yet today he remains the most fascinating figure the world has ever known. The following letter, describing his behavior at the battle of Waterloo, will live for years to come:

"It Is Too Late"

ON Wednesday last I rode over the field of Waterloo, now forever consecrated to immortality. The ghastly tokens of the carnage is now removed, the bodies of both men and horses being either burned or buried; but all the ground is still torn with the shot and shells, and covered with cartridges, old hats, and shoes, and various relics of the fray which the peasants have not thought worth removing....

The front, on which the armies engaged, does not exceed a long mile. Our line, indeed, originally extended half-a-mile farther towards the village Brains-la-Laude.... In this spot vast numbers had fallen; and, being hastily buried, the smell is most offensive at this moment. Indeed, I felt the same annoyance in many parts of the field; and, did I live near the spot, I should be anxious about the diseases which this steaming carnage might occasion....

I spoke long with a shrewd French peasant, called John De Costar. He guided me to the spot where Bonaparte remained during the latter part of the action. It was in the highway from Brussels to Charleroi,

where it runs between two high banks, on each of which was a French battery. He was pretty well sheltered from the English fire; and, though many bullets flew over his head, neither he nor any of his suite were touched. His other stations, during that day, were still more remote from all danger. The story of his having an observatory erected for him is a mistake. There is such a thing, and he repaired to it during the action; but it was built or erected some months before, for the purpose of a trigonometrical survey of the country, by the King of the Netherlands. Bony's (Bonaparte) last position was nearly fronting a tree where the Duke of Wellington was stationed; there was not more than a quarter of a mile between them, but Bony was well sheltered, and the Duke so much exposed, that the tree is barked in several places by the cannon balls levelled at him. As for Bony, De Costar says he was very cool during the whole day, and even gay. As the cannon balls flew over them, De Costar ducked; at which the Emperor laughed, and told him they would hit him all the same. At length, about the time he made his grand and last effort, the fire of the Prussian artillery was heard upon his right, and the heads of their columns became visible pressing out of the woods. Aide-de-camp after aide-de-camp came with the tidings of their advance, to which Bony only replied, "Wait!

Wait! an instant!" until he saw his troops, infantrymen and cavaliers, return in disorder from the attack. He then observed hastily to a general beside him, "I think that they are engaged." The person to whom he spoke hastily raised the spy-glass to his eye; but Bony, whom the first glance had satisfied of their total discomfiture, bent his face to the ground, and shook his head twice, his complexion being then as pale as death. The general then said something, to which Bonaparte answered, *"C'est trop tard — sauvons-nous."* (It is too late, let's save ourselves.) Just at that moment the allied troops, cavalry and infantry, appeared in full advance on all hands; and the Prussians, operating upon the right flank of the French, were rapidly gaining their rear. Bony, therefore, was compelled to abandon the highroad, which, besides, was choked with dead, with baggage and with cannon; and gaining the open country kept at full gallop, until he gained, like Johnnie Cope, the van of the flying army. The marshals followed his example; and it was the most complete sauve qui peut (save himself who can) that can well be imagined....

Walter Scott.

40

JANE WELSH CARLYLE TO THOMAS CARLYLE

A GREAT *genius is often a poor husband. The marital life of Thomas Carlyle and Jane Welsh was a domestic drama of bitterness and the deepest love. Both were irritable, due to considerable illness; both were quick-tempered. Carlyle was afflicted with chronic indigestion. The worst punishment he thought suitable for Satan would be to compel the latter to "try to digest for all eternity with my stomach." Mrs. Carlyle once said that living with him was like living with a lunatic. But she loved him deeply. He had found it very difficult to win the brilliant and beautiful Jane Welsh, descendant of John Knox and William Wallace. Their early married life was filled with poverty and spiritual stress. Her letters written to him during periods of absences from each other are among the best in the English language. They reflect a very interesting personality. She was a woman and wanted her husband to show the affection due to a wife. "You don't want to be praised for doing your duty," he once said to her. "I did though," she wrote. What woman doesn't? She was proud of Carlyle and was one of the first to recognize his genius. What wife, what*

husband, has not experienced something like the incident described in the following touching little letter?

"Dearer Than Any Earthly Creature"

Seaforth, Tuesday, July 14, 1846

OH! my dear husband, fortune has played me such a cruel trick this day! And I do not feel any resentment against fortune, for the suffocating misery of the last two hours. I know always when I seem to you most exacting, that whatever happens to me is nothing like so bad as I deserve. But you shall hear how it was.

Not a line from you on my birthday, the postmistress averred! I did not burst out crying, did not faint — did not do anything absurd, so far as I know; but I walked back again, without speaking a word; and with such tumult of wretchedness in my heart as you, who know me, can conceive. And then I shut myself in my own room to fancy everything that was most tormenting. Were you, finally, so out of patience with me that you had resolved to write to me no more at all? Had you gone to Addiscombe, and found no leisure there to remember my existence? Were you taken so ill that you could not write?

That last idea made me mad to get off to the railway, and back to London. Oh, mercy! What a two hours I had of it! ("Oh, my darling little woman." A note by Carlyle on reading the letter.)

And just when I was at my wit's end, I heard Julia crying out through the house: "Mrs. Carlyle, Mrs. Carlyle! Are you there? Here is a letter for you."

And so there was after all! The postmistress had overlooked it, and had given it to Robert, when he went afterwards, not knowing that we had been. I wonder what love-letter was ever received with such thankfulness! Oh, my dear! I am not fit for living in the world with this organization. I am as much broken to pieces by that little accident as if I had come through an attack of cholera or typhus fever. I cannot even steady my hand to write decently. But I felt an irresistible need of thanking you, by return of post. Yes, I have kissed the dear little card-case; and now I will lie down awhile, and try to get some sleep. At least, to quiet myself; I will try to believe — oh, why cannot I believe it, once for all — that, with all my faults and follies, I am "dearer to you than any earthly creature." I will be better for Geraldine here; she is become very quiet and nice; and as affectionate for me as ever.

Your own

J. C.

41

JOHN KEATS TO FANNIE BRAWNE

Poor *John Keats lived the last part of his few short years between the consuming fires of an insatiable love and an incurable disease, the latter, or both, taking him to the grave when he was only twenty-five years of age. He fell deeply in love with Fannie Brawne, an eighteen year old girl, and the next six months of his life were the most productive of his whole career. Soon after he met Miss Brawne the dreaded disease, consumption, appeared and he knew that his life was doomed. He knew that he would never marry. His letters to Miss Brawne are tragic. "I can bear to die," he said, "I cannot bear to leave her." He was the apostle of beauty, writing the immortal line, "A thing of beauty is a joy forever." He died in Rome, and was buried there. On the modest stone which marks his grave was placed at his request: "Here lies one whose name was writ in water." No one can read his letters to Fannie Brawne without being profoundly moved.*

"I Am Glad There Is a Grave"

Kentish Town, August, 1820

MY Dearest Girl,

I wish you would invent some means to make me at all happy without you. Every hour I am more and more concentrated in you; everything else tastes like chaff in my mouth. I feel it almost impossible to go to Italy — the fact is I cannot leave you, and shall never taste one minute's content until it pleases chance to let me live with you for good. But I will not go on at this rate. A person in health as you are can have no conception of the horrors that nerves and a temper like mine go through. What island do your friends propose to retire to? I should be happy to go with you there alone, but in company I should object to it.... I shall never be able any more to endure the society of those who used to meet at Elm Cottage and Wentworth Place. The last two years taste like brass upon my palate. If I cannot live with you I will live alone. I do not think my health will improve much while I am separated from you. For all this I am averse to seeing you. I cannot bear flashes of light and return into my

glooms again. I am not so unhappy now as I should be if I had seen you yesterday. To be happy with you seems such an impossibility! It requires a luckier star than mine. It will never be! I enclose a passage from one of your letters which I want you to alter a little. I want (if you will have it so) the matter expressed less coldly to me. If my health would bear it, I could write a poem, which I have in my head, which would be a consolation for people in such a situation as mine. I would show someone in love as I am, with a person living in such liberty as you do. Shakespeare always sums up matters in the most sovereign manner. Hamlet's heart was full of such misery as mine is when he said to Ophelia, "Go to a nunnery, go, go!" Indeed I should like to give up the matter at once — I should like to die. I am sickened at the brute world which you are smiling with. I hate men, and women more. I see nothing but thorns for the future — wherever I may be next winter, in Italy or nowhere, Brown will be living near you with his indecencies. I see no prospect of any rest. Suppose me in Rome — well, I should there see you as in a magic glass going to and from town at all hours — I wish you could infuse a little confidence of human nature in my heart. I cannot muster any — the world is too brutal; for me — I am glad there is such a thing as the grave — I am sure I

shall never have any rest till I get there. At any rate I will indulge myself by never seeing any more Dilke or Brown or any of their friends. I wish I was either in your arms full of faith or that a thunder bolt would strike me.

God bless you,

J. K.

42

EDGAR ALLAN POE TO JOHN ALLAN

WHAT *made Edgar Allan Poe's life so tragic? Was he really intended by nature to be melancholy, or was it due largely to circumstances? Letters to his foster father, published for the first time in 1925, may throw some light on these questions. Bereft of his parents at an early age, he was adopted by a man who misunderstood him, and, consequently failed to give the young genius the sympathy and encouragement which his temperament needed. Poe seemed always to have been out of place in the world. The cruel twists of fortune he never could understand. To him life was a realm of dismal shadows, and he was never able to find his way to sunshine. The following letter to his foster father is a splendid picture of a youth who had found this world a sad disappointment:*

"My Heart Was Breaking"

West Point, January 3, 1830

SIR,

I suppose, (although you desire no further communication with yourself, on my part) that your restriction does not extend to my answering your final letter.

Did I, when an infant, solicit your charity and protection, or was it of your own free will, that you volunteered your services in my behalf? It is well known to respectable individuals in Baltimore, and elsewhere, that my grandfather (my natural protector at the time you interposed) was wealthy, and that I was his favorite grandchild. But the promises of adoption, and liberal education which you held forth to him in a letter which is now in possession of my family, induced him to resign all care of me into your hands. Under such circumstances, can it be said that I have no *right* to expect anything at your hands? You may probably urge that you have given me a liberal education. I will leave the decision of that question to those who know how far liberal educations can be obtained

in eight months at the University of Virginia.... Had you let me return, my reformation had been sure — as my conduct the last three months gave every reason to believe.... I will boldly say that it was wholly and entirely your own mistaken parsimony that caused all the difficulties in which I was involved while at Charlottesville. The expenses of the institution at the lowest estimate were $350. per annum. You sent me there with $110.... I had of course the mortification of running in debt for public property — against the known rules of the institution, and was immediately regarded in the light of a beggar.... It was then that I became dissolute, for how could it be otherwise? I could associate with no students, except those who were in a similar situation with myself, although from different causes — they from drunkenness, and extravagance — I, because it was my crime to have no one on earth who cared for me, or loved me. I call God to witness that I have never loved dissipation. Those who know me know that my pursuits and habits are very far from anything of the kind.... I then became desperate and gambled — until I finally involved myself irretrievably. ... In the army as a common soldier, I earned, myself, by the most humiliating privations, a cadet's warrant which you could have obtained at any time for asking.... You promised to forgive all, but you sent me

to West Point like a beggar. The same difficulties are threatening me as before at Charlottesville, and I must resign.... When I parted from you at the steamboat, I knew I should never see you again. As regards Sergeant Graves, I did write him a letter. As to the truth of its contents, I leave it to God, and your own conscience. The time in which I wrote it was within a half hour after you had embittered every feeling of my heart against you by your abuse of my family, and myself, under your own roof, and at a time when you knew my heart was breaking. I have no more to say, except that my future life (which thank God will not endure long) must be passed in indulgence and sickness....

E. A. Poe.

43

LONGFELLOW TO A LITTLE GIRL

"BETTER *to be driven out from among men," said R. H. Dana, "than to be disliked by children." No wonder children love the "white Mr. Longfellow," as William Dean Howells called him, for he loved children dearly.*

"Ah, what would the world be to us
If the children were no more?"

he once wrote.

When Edward Bok as a boy visited Longfellow he was entertained by hours by the great poet, as though Bok were a distinguished grown man. Bok noticed the large number of requests which came to Longfellow for his autograph. Sometimes more than a dozen would come in one mail. Longfellow would take a card out of a drawer and write his name on it. "There are a good many of these every day," said the great poet, "but I always like to do this little favor. It seems so little to do, to write your name on a card; and if I didn't do it some boy or girl might be looking, day by day, for the postman and be disappointed. In his poem, "The Children's Hour," Longfellow immortalizes his three daughters, using their real names: "Grave Alice and laughing Allegra and Edith with golden hair." No collection of

great letters would be complete without one such as the following:

"Alice, Allegra and Edith"

To Emily A. Nahant, August 18, 1859

YOUR letter followed me down here by the seaside where I am passing the summer with my three little girls. The oldest is about your age; but as little girls' ages keep changing every year, I can never remember exactly how old she is and have to ask her Mamma who has a better memory than I have. Her name is Alice, I never forget that. She is a nice girl and loves poetry about as much as I do. The second is Edith with blue eyes and beautiful golden locks which I sometimes call her "Nankeen hair" to make her laugh. She is a very busy little woman and wears gray boots. The youngest is Allegra; which you know means merry; and she is the merriest little thing you ever saw — always singing and laughing all over the house.

These are my three little girls and Mr. Read has painted them all in one picture which I hope you will

see some day. They bathe in the sea and dig in the sand and patter about the piazza all day long and sometimes go to see the Indians encamped on the shore and buy baskets and bows and arrows. I do not say anything about the two boys. They are such noisy fellows it is of no use to talk about them.

And now, dear Miss Emily, give my love to your papa and good-night with a kiss from his friend and yours.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

44

THOMAS HUXLEY TO CHARLES DARWIN

Trouble over the theory of evolution, suggested by Charles Darwin in his monumental work, origin of species, *and which started the controversy about the "monkey" ancestry of man, was predicted by Thomas Huxley, Darwin's friend, when the book was first published. Huxley was also a great scientist, with the gift of expressing scientific matters in an interesting and popular manner. He was ready to defend Darwin to the limit, as the following famous letter indicates:*

"I Am Sharpening Up My Claws"

Jermyn Street, W., November 23, 1859

MY Dear Darwin,— I finished your book yesterday, a lucky examination having furnished me with a few hours of continuous leisure.

Since I read Von Bar's essays, nine years ago, no work on Natural History Science I have met with has made so great an impression on me, and I do most

heartily thank you for the great store of new views you have given me. Nothing, I think, can be better than the tone of the book, it impresses those who know nothing about the subject. As for your doctrine, I am prepared to go to the stake, if requisite, in support of Chapter IX, and most parts of Chapters X, XI and XII....

As to the first four chapters, I agree thoroughly and fully with all the principles laid down in them. I think that you have demonstrated a true cause for the production of species, and have thrown the onus probandi, that species did not arise in the way you suppose, on your adversaries....

I trust you will not allow yourself to be in any way disgusted and annoyed by the considerable abuse and misrepresentation, which, unless I greatly mistake, is in store for you. Depend upon it you have earned the lasting gratitude of all thoughtful men. And as to curs which will bark and yelp, you must recollect that some of your friends, at any rate, are endowed with an amount of combativeness which (though you have often and justly rebuked it) may stand you in good stead.

I am sharpening up my claws and beak in readiness.

Looking back over my letter, it really expresses

so feebly all I think about you and your noble book that I am half ashamed of it; but you will understand that, like the parrot in the story, "I think the more."

Ever yours faithfully.

In *reply to this letter Darwin said in part:*

I should have been more than contented with one quarter of what you have said. Exactly fifteen months ago, when I put pen to paper for this volume, I had awful misgivings.... I then fixed in my mind three judges, on whose decision I determined mentally to abide. The judges were Lyell, Hooker, and yourself. ... You have most cleverly hit on one point, which has greatly troubled me; if, as I must think, external conditions produce little direct effect, what the devil determines each particular variation? What makes a tuft of feathers come on a cock's head, or moss on a moss-rose? I shall much like to talk over this with you....

My Dear Huxley, I thank you cordially for your letter.

Yours very sincerely.

45

LINCOLN TO GENERAL HOOKER

The Civil War at its height. The South was winning. Lincoln had tried one general after another, and they had failed him. He was looking for a real fighter to cope with the genius of Lee and his generals. He saw such a fighter in General Hooker. Although Hooker had ability he was ambitious, and had distrusted his commander, General Burnsides. Moreover he had spoken disrespectfully of President Lincoln. In such a crisis Lincoln knew that a mistake in the selection might lose the war. But he decided that Hooker, in spite of his shortcomings, was the man. He wrote Hooker appointing him as commander of the Army of the Potomac. No letter that Lincoln ever wrote, or few of his acts, show the greatness of the man more than this incident. The original letter was sold a few years ago for $10,000. "Cheap at the price," said the editor of one of our great periodicals. The letter follows:

"Go Forth and Give Us Victories"

January 26, 1863

GENERAL:

I have placed you at the head of the Army of the Potomac. Of course I have done this upon what appear to me to be sufficient reasons, and yet I think it best for you to know that there are some things in regard to which I am not quite satisfied with you. I believe you to be a brave and skillful soldier, which of course I like. I also believe you do not mix politics with your profession, in which you are right. You have confidence in yourself, which is a valuable if not an indispensable quality. You are ambitious, which, within reasonable bounds, does good rather than harm. But I think that during General Burnsides' command of the army you have taken counsel of your ambition and thwarted him as much as you could, in which you did a great wrong to the country and to a meritorious and honorable brother officer. I have heard, in such a way as to believe it, of your recently saying that both the army and the country needed a dictator. Of course it was not for this, but in spite of it, that I have given you the

command. Only those generals who gain successes can set up dictators. What I now ask of you is military success, and I will risk the dictatorship. The government will support you to the utmost of its ability, which is neither more nor less than it has done and will do for all commanders. I much fear that the spirit which you have aided to infuse into the army, of criticising their commander and withholding confidence from him, will now turn upon you. I shall assist you as far as I can to put it down. Neither you nor Napoleon, if he were alive again, could get any good out of an army while such a spirit prevails in it; and now beware of rashness. Beware of rashness; but with energy and sleepless vigilance go forth and give us victories.

Yours very truly,

A. Lincoln.

46

LINCOLN TO MRS. BIXBY

All the world knows Abraham Lincoln's letter to Mrs. Bixby. Lincoln suffered deeply with every wounded soldier and every war widow and mother. The War Department complained that Lincoln pardoned so many soldiers who were sentenced to death, that it was difficult to maintain discipline. Far into the night he would be seen poring over war files, looking for clues to enable him to save the life of some mother's son. His official duty did not call for a lot of this extra work, but he had a conscience. Somehow the soldiers at the front felt that there was a sympathetic father in the White House. No wonder they voted for him when the crisis arose over his reëlection. But this tendency to pardon soldiers was not a weakness. He could be firm when he felt that it was necessary. The War Department looked at details; he looked at human lives. War Departments are machines, and machines do not have souls. Lincoln had efficiency plus a soul, and he could see good in what seemed to others to be harmful. This letter to Mrs. Bixby is typical of the sentiment which he would have expressed to every mother and widow. For beauty of senti-

ment, phrasing and sincerity, no letter surpasses this gem, and hard indeed is he who is not moved by it.

"The Altar of Freedom"

Washington, November 21, 1864

DEAR Madam: I have been shown in the files of the War Department a statement of the Adjutant General of Massachusetts that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle. I feel how weak and fruitless must be any words of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming. But I cannot refrain from tendering to you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save. I pray that our heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom.

Yours very sincerely and respectfully,
Abraham Lincoln.

"The altar of freedom" is a phrase that is comparatively new in the vocabulary of mankind; new because freedom is new. No one has ever given freedom a more beautiful and sacred setting than does Lincoln in this letter. He gave it the sanctity of religion.

Lincoln's effective and poetic use of the English language is recognized wherever English is read or spoken. His first and second inaugural addresses are the utterances of a prophet. They breathe the spirit of the charitable soul that gave them to the world.

Let us again read these inspiring words from his First Inaugural address:

"I am loath to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union when again touched, as surely as they will be, by the better angels of our nature."

Or in the Second Inaugural address:

"With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in."

In the Gettysburg address Lincoln summed up the ideals of this country. In his famous reply to Hayne, Daniel Webster spoke of our Constitution as being made "for the people, made by the people, and answerable to the people", but it was Lincoln who gave immortality to this thought by the setting in which he placed it in his address at Gettysburg. He declared, "that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

47

PRINCESS ALICE TO QUEEN VICTORIA

Not *all princesses are the dream creatures which children read about in story books. Not all of them are courted by a handsome prince wearing a glorious uniform, with trappings and plumes. Not all princesses are as beautiful as a goddess nor as good as angels. Many of them live very real lives, suffer the pangs of disappointed love, pass dreary days waiting for news of the battle-front, or go into mourning for the loss of loved ones. A modern princess who was greatly beloved by the people of her country, was Princess Alice of England, the daughter of Queen Victoria. She seemed to possess all of the qualities which every princess should have. When Queen Victoria's husband, Prince Albert, died, the Queen's grief was unbounded. It was a tragedy which seriously threatened the normal course of her life. During these dark days it was the faithfulness of the young princess which attracted the attention of the English people and called forth a beautiful tribute to her from the London Times. Princess Alice was tender-hearted, charitable, courageous, energetic, religious. She was happily married to Prince Louis of Hesse. The letters which this ideal princess wrote to a wonderful queen reveal the beauty*

of a splendid life and merit the fame which they have received.

"God Bless You, My Own Mama"

Darmstadt, July 19, 1866.

BELOVED Mama,—What a time I have passed during these eight days since Baby's birth! First, I have to thank the Almighty for having preserved my own sweet and adored husband, and for the blessing of having him by me, so dear, so precious, during my confinement. After three days he had to go, and when he got near Aschaffenburg found fighting going on. We could hear the guns near. The Prussians shot from the roofs of the houses; they fought in the streets; it must have been horrid. Our troops retreated (as had always been intended) in perfect order. The wounded were brought in here the following day. The 13th and the 14th they fought. Louis was there on the 14th; since then I have not seen him — God knows when I shall see him again.

The Prussians have taken Frankfort, and they are at home here. No communications allowed; get no papers or letters; may send none! An existence of

monstrous anxiety and worry, which it is impossible for those to imagine who have not lived through it.... I long for a letter from you. We have none at all, and I have had none from you since Baby's birth. The people fly from here in all available cabs.

How I pray some end may soon come to this horrid bloodshed! Ah, the misery around us you can't imagine. The times are hard; it wants all a Christian's courage and patience to carry one through them; but there is one Friend who in the time of need does not forsake one, and He is my comfort and support. God bless you, my own Mama, and pray for your child,

Alice.

THE *two letters which follow show how deeply Princess Alice and Queen Victoria were touched by the memory of the beloved father and husband, Prince Albert:*

Darmstadt, July 19, 1866

AS every year during these days my thoughts are with you, and as each year brings round again the anniversary of that dreadful misfortune, it seems more and more impossible that five years should already

have elapsed, since He whom we all loved so tenderly was taken from our sight. How I thank the Almighty again and again, as this season returns, that he spared you to us, when at such a moment we trembled for your precious life, fearing that *two so united in life even in death could not be parted....*

Alice.

Darmstadt, December 11, 1866

BELOVED, precious Mama,—On awaking this morning, my first thoughts were of you and of dear darling Papa! Oh, how it reopens the wounds scarcely healed, when this day of pain and anguish returns! This season of the year, the leafless trees, the cold light, everything reminds me of that time!... Happily married as I am, and with such a good, excellent and loving husband, how far more can I understand now the depth of that grief, which tore your lives asunder!

Alice.

48

THE KAISER TO THE CZAR

BETWEEN *1894 and 1914 Kaiser Wilhelm II, of Germany, wrote his cousin, Czar Nicholas, of Russia, dozens of letters bearing upon important international relations. A few years ago these letters were copied from the originals in the archives of Moscow by Isaac Don Levine. He published them in England and the United States. When the London editors read the letters, they seemed to see "vast and unscrupulous intrigues and the grandiose ambitions" of the Kaiser running through these epistles. The Kaiser's astute suggestion to the Czar that the latter was threatened in the East had a part in bringing on the Russo-Japanese War, according to the London Morning Post. "It was the Kaiser's object," says this paper, "to weaken Russia and subjugate Great Britain." Was the Kaiser in reality a friend, trying to help the Czar, or was he "playing a great game" and using the weak Czar as a dupe? The following letter will always be of interest to students of international relations:*

"The Yellow Peril"

December 28, 1907

DEAREST Nicky:

With all my heart warmest wishes for 1908. God bless and protect you, Alix and the children. Let me hope of having the pleasure of meeting you again. By my visit to England I think I have removed many causes of misunderstanding and distrust, so that the atmosphere is cleared and the pressure on the safety valve is relieved. As a piece of news *only quite private and confidential* for you personally, I found the British people very nervous about the Japanese whom they begin to fear and mistrust. The sailing of the American Pacific fleet has angered London highly, as they tried everything in their power to hinder it. London is afraid of an encounter between Japan and America, because they must take sides with one of them, as it will be a question of Race, not of Politiks, only Yellow versus White. The dropping of Japan would immediately entail the loss of India; which the Japanese are quietly undermining, revolutionizing, etc. The Japanese have foreseen this development and are preparing for

it. Perhaps they will first attack India and leave the Philippines alone. British Naval and Army officers spoke openly to me and my officers of the disgust of the "Yellow" alliance with Japan, whom they hate. In this state of feelings judge what an effect Count Okumas' speech a few days ago has made. The action is that of a Shimose shell in London! Now their newspapers have for the first time used the term "Yellow Peril" from my picture, which is coming true. A German gentleman just back from Mexico reported to me having himself counted 10,000 Japanese men in the plantations in South Mexico, all in military jackets with brass buttons. After work at sundown they all assemble under sergeants and officers who are disguised as simple laborers, in squads and detachments and drill and exercise with staffs of wood, which he observed very often, when they thought they were unobserved. They are Japanese reservists who have hidden arms with them, and intended as army corps to seize the Panama Canal and to cut off communication on land with America. It is not impossible that England will have to send out a squadron to the Pacific, which they are very loath to do. Meanwhile American and British journalists are having a little friendly nose-pulling among each other, which shows the nervousness of the London Press. This is my *secret* information

for you *personally,* so that you may have time to arrange for your plans; it is sure information and good, as you well know by now that I never gave you wrong one. The main point is to have one's eyes open and be prepared. The development may be slow, yet incidents may create an unexpected and sudden outburst before the question has ripened, as will sometimes happen. It is imposing to observe how well the Japanese prepare themselves for an emergency! they are going in for the whole of Asia, carefully preparing their blows and against the white race in general! Remember my picture, it's coming true! If France sides with England in this affair, Saigon and Annam are gone!

Willy.

49

WALTER HINES PAGE TO ARTHUR W. PAGE

SOME *day a great writer with the imagination of a Milton and the philosophy of a Schopenhauer will write a tragedy of the nations. And what a piece of work it will be! It will contain all the tears of five thousand years, and the wailings of humanity will furnish the orchestral music. Open your ancient history and you can hear the voices of old Babylonia, with her many states and gilded kings, crying out of the dust of the centuries. Purple robes and Hanging Gardens! Ah, Belshazzar! And where is the glory of Greece and the grandeur of Rome? Where are the beautiful cedars of Lebanon, the magnificent ships of Tyre and Sidon! And where are the "topless towers of Ilium"? The strewn and wasted columns of materialistic Rome; Rome with the burden of slaves on her back; Rome that fed her Christians to the beasts, attest the fact that "man's inhumanity to man" does not pay. And what excellent material would the author of this tragedy find for his fifth act in the seething years of the World War! It is of a war-weary world, a world that knew not itself, a world not of the dim ages past, but of our own day, that Walter Hines Page writes in the follow-*

ing letter, perhaps the most significant of the many celebrated letters which he wrote:

"The Curtains Are Drawn and the Music Is Muffled"

American Embassy, London, December 23, 1917

DEAR Arthur:

... A wave of depression hangs over the land like a London fog. And everybody on this tired-outside of the world shows a disposition to lean too heavily on us — to depend on us so completely that the fear arises that they may unconsciously relax their utmost efforts when we begin to fight.... Except the British and the French, there's not a nation in Europe worth a tinker's damn when you come to the real scratch. The whole continent is tyrannical or rotten or yellow-dog. I wouldn't give Long Island or Moore County for the whole of continental Europe, with its kings and itching palms....

It is ... the weariest Christmas in all British annals, certainly since the Napoleonic wars....

Depression or elation show equally the undue strain that British nerves are under. I dare say nobody

is entirely normal. News of many sorts can now be circulated only by word of mouth. The queerest stories are whispered about and find at least temporary credence.... Sensation-mongers appear at every old-woman's knitting circle. And all this has an effect on conduct. Two young wives of noble officers now in France have just run away with two other young noblemen — to the scandal of a large part of good society in London. It is universally said that the morals of more hitherto good people are wrecked by the strain put upon women by the absence of their husbands than was ever before heard of. Everybody is overworked. Fewer people are literally truthful than ever before. Men and women break down and fall out of working ranks continuously. The number of men in the government who have disappeared from public view is amazing, the number that would like to disappear is still greater — from sheer overstrain. The Prime Minister is tired.... I lunched with Mr. Asquith yesterday; even he seemed jaded; and Mrs. Asquith assured me that "everything is going to the devil fast." Some conspicuous men who have always been sober have taken to drink. The very few public dinners that are held are served with ostentatious meagreness to escape criticism. I attended one last week at which there was no bread, no butter, no sugar served.... Overwork and the loss

of sons and friends — the list of the last grows — always makes an abnormal strain. The churches are fuller than ever before. So, too, are the "parlours" of the fortune-tellers. So also the theatres — in the effort to forget oneself. There are afternoon dances for officers at home on leave: the curtains are drawn and the music is muffled. More marriages take place — blind and maimed, as well as the young fellows just going to France — than were ever celebrated in any year within men's memory. Verse-writing is rampant. I have received enough odes and sonnets celebrating the Great Republic and the Great President to fill a folio volume. Several American Y. M. C. A. workers lately turned rampant pacifists and had to be sent home. Colonial soldiers and now and then an American sailor turn up at our Y. M. C. A. huts as full as a goat and swear after the event that they never did such a thing before. Emotions and strain everywhere!

Affectionately,

W. H. P.

50

WOODROW WILSON TO ROBERT LANSING

President Wilson was desperately ill. There was deep concern among the people, and especially among members of his cabinet as to what steps should be taken toward carrying on the executive branch of the government. In emergencies Secretary of State Robert Lansing called cabinet meetings to discuss matters of state. For more than a year misunderstanding had been growing between the two. It began at the Paris Peace Conference. Calling of the cabinet meetings during Mr. Wilson's illness served to bring this estranged feeling between them to a point. Men in high places sometimes forget their positions and allow their passions to lead them into regrettable incidents. It happened with these two men. "The people dislike exhibitions of high feeling in these exalted places," said the New York Times. "They are unpleasant and disquieting." The New York World declared, "The country will not rest satisfied with the cryptic correspondence between Mr. Wilson and Mr. Lansing. There will be a general demand for a bill of particulars to explain the President's extraordinary action." The letter which caused the unhappy incident, unprecedented in our history, is as follows:

"Is It True?"

The White House,
Washington, February 7, 1920

MY Dear Mr. Secretary:

Is it true, as I have been told, that during my illness you have frequently called the heads of the executive departments of the Government into conference? If it is, I feel it my duty to call your attention to considerations which I do not care to dwell upon until I learn from you yourself that this is the fact.

Under our constitutional law and practice, as developed hitherto, no one but the President has the right to summon the heads of the executive departments into conference, and no one but the President and the Congress has the right to ask their views or the views of any one of them on any public question.

I take this matter up with you because in the development of every constitutional system, custom and precedent are of the most serious consequence, and I think we will all agree in desiring not to lead in any wrong direction. I have therefore taken the liberty of

writing you to ask this question, and I am sure you will be glad to answer.

I am happy to learn from your recent note to Mrs. Wilson that your strength is returning.

Cordially and sincerely yours,

Woodrow Wilson.

Honorable Robert Lansing,
Secretary of State.

In *reply to this letter Mr. Lansing informed Mr. Wilson that he did not consider calling the department heads into conference as a usurpation of Presidential authority. He also wrote that if Mr. Wilson thought that he had failed in loyalty to him he was willing to resign. The President expressed disappointment at Mr. Lansing's explanations and accepted his suggestion that the latter resign. Mr. Lansing wrote a letter of resignation, which was accepted immediately. On February 13, 1920, the newspaper bureaus in Washington flashed to the world the following: "Robert Lansing retired from the office of Secretary of State today under sensational circumstances, involving personal differences with President Wilson."*

INDEX

Actium, battle of, 18
Adams, John, to Thomas Jefferson, 133-136
Agrippina, Empress, to her son, Nero, 30-32
Akakia. *See* Diatribe of Dr. Akakia
Alexander the coppersmith, 28
Alexander the Great, to Darius, 5-7
  and Diogenes, 9-11
Alice, Princess, to Queen Victoria, 165-168
Allan, John, Edgar Allan Poe to, 148-151
American Revolution, George Washington to the
  Continental Congress, 116-119
  Thomas Paine to George Washington, 120-123
  Benjamin Franklin to Strahan, 128-129
Antioch, crusaders' battle near, 53-55
Antony, Mark, Brutus and Cassius to, 15-17
  his infatuation for Cleopatra, 18-20
Apostles, St. Paul to Timothy, 25-29
  power of St. Peter, 46
  St. Paul quoted, 50
Arbela, battle of, 7
Aristippus, Diogenes to, 9-10
Augustus Caesar, Herod the Great to, 18-20
  to Roman bachelors, 22-24
Aurelian, Emperor, to Queen Zenobia, and her reply, 41-43

Bachelors, Augustus Caesar to, 22-24
Bacon, Sir Francis, to King James I., 90-93
Beauharnais, Josephine de. *See* Josephine
Bixby, Mrs., Abraham Lincoln to, 161-162

Black Death, 69-72
Bohemond, 53, 54
Bok, Edward, and Longfellow, 152
Boleyn, Anne, to Henry VIII., 73-75
Bolingbroke, Defense of Lord, 105
Bonaparte, Napoleon. *See* Napoleon
Bothwell, Earl of, Mary, Queen of Scots to, 79-82
Brawne, Fanny, John Keats to, 144-147
Britannicus, 30
Brutus and Cassius to Mark Antony, 15-17
Buccleuch, Duke of, Sir Walter Scott to, 137-140
Burleigh, Lord, Walter, Earl of Essex to, 76-78
and Sir Francis Bacon, 90

Caesar, Julius, Cicero to, 12-14
Brutus and Cassius to Mark Antony on his assassination, 15-17
Carlyle, Jane Welsh, to Thomas Carlyle, 141-143
Carpus, 28
Cassius and Brutus to Mark Antony, 15-17
Catherine of Aragon, 73
Charles I., 94
Chesterfield, Earl of, to his son, Philip Stanhope, 109-112
Dr. Samuel Johnson to, 113-115
Children's Hour, The, 152
Christianity, St. Paul to Timothy, 25-29
crusader's letter to his wife, 52-55
Cicero to Julius Caesar, 12-14
Civil War, Abraham Lincoln to General Hooker, 158-160
Lincoln to Mrs. Bixby, 161-162
Cleopatra, Mark Antony's infatuation for, 18-20
Clermont, Pope Urban at, 52
Continental Congress, George Washington to, 116-119
Crescens, 28

Cromwell, Oliver, to Colonel Hacker, 94-95
Crusades, Count Stephen's letter to his wife, 52-55

Dana, R. H., quoted, 152
Danzig, deaths from a plague, 69
Darius, King, Alexander the Great to, 5-7
Darnley, Lord, 80
Darwin, Charles, Thomas Huxley to, 155-157
  reply, 157
De Costar, John, 138, 139
Defense of Lord Bolingbroke, 105
Demas, 28
Diatribe of Dr. Akakia, 105
Diogenes, the Cynic, to the people of Synope, 8-9
  to Aristippus, 9-10
  and Alexander the Great, 9-11

Egyptians, belief concerning woman's origin, 38-39
Elizabeth, Queen, to Mary, Queen of Scots, 83-85
Emily A., Longfellow to, 152-154
Emperors and Popes, contest between, 44
Empson, Captain, 95
Essex, Walter, Earl of, to Lord Burleigh, 76-78

Florence, Italy, Petrarch on a plague at, 69
Foch, Marshal, 96
Franklin, Benjamin, and Thomas Paine, 120
  to Strahan, 128-129
Frederick the Great, Voltaire to, 105-107
  dismissal of Voltaire, 107-108
Frederick William, Prince of Prussia, Voltaire to, 101-104
French Revolution, Thomas Paine to George Washington, 120-123

Gettysburg address, 164
God, Voltaire on, 101-103
Greeks, conquest of Persians, 7
Gregory VII., Pope, to Henry IV. of Germany, 44-47
  reply of Henry IV., 48-51
Grignan, Madame de, Madame Sévigné to, 124-127
Guliano, Michel Angelo to, 60-62

Hacker, Colonel Francis, 94-95
Henry IV., of Germany, Pope Gregory VII. to, 44-47
  Henry's reply, 48-51
Henry VIII., Anne Boleyn to, 73-75
Herculaneum, destruction of, 33-36
Herod the Great to Augustus Caesar, 18-20
Hildebrand. *See* Gregory VII., Pope
Holbach, Baron d', 101
Holy Lands, crusades, 52-55
Hooker, General Joseph, Abraham Lincoln to, 158-160
Howells, William Dean, quoted, 152
Hubbert, Captain, 94-95
Hume, David, letter concerning Rousseau, 97-100
Huntington, General, quoted, 116
Huxley, Thomas, to Charles Darwin, 155-157
  reply, 157

Ironsides, 94

Jackson, "Stonewall," 96
James I., King of England, Sir Francis Bacon to, 90-93
Jefferson, Thomas, to John Adams, 133-136
Jesus Christ, references by St. Paul, 26-28
Johnson, Dr. Samuel, to the Earl of Chesterfield, 113-115
Josephine, Napoleon to, 130-132
Julius II., Pope, and Michel Angelo, 60-62

Keats, John, to Fanny Brawne, 144-147

Lansing, Robert, Woodrow Wilson to, 177-179
Leo X., Pope, to Duke George of Saxony, 66-68
Laura, supposed reference to, in Petrarch's letter, 58
Lentulus, 14
Lincoln, Abraham, to General Hooker, 158-160
  to Mrs. Bixby, 161-162
  excerpts from first and second inaugural addresses, 163
  Gettysburg address, 164
Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth, to Emily A., 152-154
Lowell, James Russell, cited, 101
Luke, 28
Luther, Martin, to his son Hans, 63-65
  Pope Leo X. to Duke George of Saxony, in regard to, 66-68

Macaulay, Thomas B., on Sir Francis Bacon, 90
Marcus Aurelius to some women of Rome, 37-40
Mardonius, General, 6
Marston Moor, battle of, 94
Mary, Queen of Scots, to the Earl of Bothwell, 79-81
  Queen Elizabeth to, 83-85
Maupertuis, Voltaire on, 105
Medici, Catherine de, 79
Michel Angelo to the Pope's architect, 60-62
Miltitz, Charles Von, 67
Moscholum River, crusaders' battle at, 54
Mucapor, Aurelian to, 43

Naples, description of a plague at, 69-72
Napoleon to Josephine, 130-132
  battle of Waterloo, 137-140
Nero, Agrippina to, 30-32

Nicholas, Czar of Russia, Kaiser Wilhelm II. to, 169-172
Nile, Egyptians' belief of origin of woman, 38-39

Ochus, King, Socrates to, 3-4
Octavian, 14
Onesiphorus, 27
Origin of Species, Thomas Huxley on, 155-157

Page, Walter Hines, to Arthur W. Page, 173-176
Paine, Thomas, to George Washington, 120-123
Palestine, crusades to, 52-55
Palmyra, Queen Zenobia of, 41-43
Parmenio, General, 5
Paul, St., to Timothy, 25-29
  quoted, 50
Persians, defeat at Arbela, 7
Peter, St., power of, 46
Petrarch to posterity, 56-59
  on a plague at Florence, 69
Philip, of Macedonia, 6
Plague, description of Naples during, 69-72
Pliny, the Younger, to Tacitus, 33-36
Poe, Edgar Allan, to John Allan, 148-151
Pompeii, destruction of, 33-36
Pompey, Cicero to Julius Caesar, 12-14
Popes and emperors, contest between, 44
Posterity, Petrarch to, 56-59
Prayer, efficacy in battle, 94-96
Prisoner of the Vatican, 44

Raleigh, Sir Walter, to his wife, 86-89
Raymond, Count of St. Gilles, 53, 54

Reformation, Pope Leo X. to Duke George of Saxony, on Martin Luther and the, 66-68
Rome, Cicero to Julius Caesar on Pompey, 12-14
Brutus and Cassius to Mark Antony, 15-17
Augustus Caesar to Roman bachelors, 22-24
Marcus Aurelius to some women of, 37-40
Rousseau, Jean Jacques, David Hume's letter concerning his eccentricities, 97-100

St. Albans, Francis. *See* Bacon, Sir Francis
St. Gilles, Raymond, Count of, 53, 54
Saracens, 55
Saxony, George, Duke of, Pope Leo X. to, 66-68
Scott, Sir Walter, to Duke of Buccleuch, 137-140
Seneca, 30
Serpent of the Nile, 18
Sévigné, Madame, to her daughter, Madame de Grignan, 124-127
Seymour, Jane, 73
Silana, 30
Socrates, to King Ochus, 3-4
Spinell, John Baptista, description of a plague in Naples, 69-72
Stanhope, Philip, Earl of Chesterfield to, 109-112
Stephen, Count, crusader, letter to his wife, 52-55
Strahan, Benjamin Franklin to, 128-129
Synope, Diogenes to the people of, 8-9
System of Nature, The, 101, 103

Tacitus, Pliny, the Younger, to, 33-36
Timothy, St. Paul to, 25-29
Turks, and the crusades, 52-55
Titus, 28

Urban, Pope, eloquence in behalf of crusades, 52

Valley Forge, 116-119
Vatel, 124-127
Vesuvius, Pliny, the Younger, to Tacitus on the eruption, 33-36
Victoria, Queen, Princess Alice to, 165-168
Virgins of Rome, Augustus Caesar on their neglect, 22-24
Voltaire, to Frederick of Prussia, 101-104, 105-107
dismissal by Frederick, 107-108

Waterloo, battle of, 137-140
Washington, George, to the Continental Congress, 116-119
Thomas Paine to, 120-123
Webster, Daniel, quoted, 164
Wellington, Duke of, at Waterloo, 139
Wells, H. G., quoted, 130
Welsh, Jane. *See* Carlyle, Jane Welsh
Wilhelm II., Kaiser of Germany, to Czar Nicholas, 169-172
Wilson, Woodrow, to Robert Lansing, 177-179
Woman, Marcus Aurelius on, 37-40
Earl of Chesterfield on, 108-112
World War, Walter Hines Page on the, 173-176

Zenobia, Emperor Aurelian to, and her reply, 41-43